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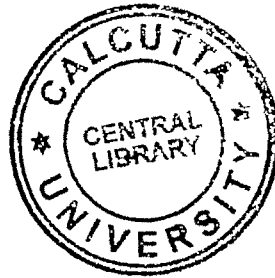
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# **JOURNAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PALI**

Volume : XIX, 2016



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## EDITORS' NOTE

We, the faculty members of the Department of Pali of the University of Calcutta, are very happy to publish this nineteenth volume of the Journal of the Department of Pali in 2016. The Present volume is dedicated to late Professor Dr. Binayendra Nath Choudhury who was a teacher of this department. He was born in Chittagong on 2nd March, 1931. He was a very eminent and profound scholar in Pali, and Buddhist studies in general. He served the University of Calcutta, Presidency College & now University and Govt. Sanskrit College Now Sankrit University, Kolkata. He retired from the as a Professor of Pali in 1994. He was a recipient of CERTIFICATE OF HONOUR from the president of India in 2007. He was the Dr. B.M. Barua Research Professor in Pali of the Asiatic Society, Kolkata for many years and occupied the same post till his death. This gigantic scholar in Pali and Buddhist Studies passed away on the 2nd August 2015.

An International Seminar on Applied Buddhism : Buddhism in Everyday life was held on the 3rd-4th March, 2016. This was inaugurated by Professor Dipak Kumar Barua. Ex-Professor Department of Pali. University of Calcutta, Centre for Research in Nano Science and Nano Technology, Saltlake, University of Culcutta. Dr. Ven. Sumanapal Bhikkhu recited the opening Mangalacaran. Dr. Jayanti Chatterjee, Departmental Head, gave he welcome address. The Keynote address was given by Professor Bela Bhattacharya, Ex-Professor, Dept. of Pali, University of Calcutta. Many scholars from India and abroad Participated and read out their larned papers on the theme which were highly appreciated by the scholars present. Professor Basab Choudhuri, Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor the occasion by his kind presence as a Chief Guest and delivering a speech. We are thankful to Guests of Honour, Professor Nareshman Vajracharya. Vice-Chancellor, Lumbini Buddhist University, Professor Satyapal Bhikkhu, Ex-Professor Dept. of Buddhist Studies, Delhi University, Prof. Samir Kumar Das, Dean Faculty of Art, University of Calcutta. Professor S. K. Pathak as he despite his very old age worked hand all along throughout the two-day's Seminar to see the Seminar a success. We are gratefull to Professor Swagata Sen, Pro-Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. University of Calcutta, he gave his presidential Address.

I was special thank to Dr. Saswati Mutsuddi Organising secretary of this conference Dr. Aiswarya Biswas, Assistant Professor gave Vote of Thanks. I am grateful to the students and teachers, including Dr. Ven. Sumanapal Bhikkhu, for their enthusiastic zeal to see the Seminar a grand success. On both days of the Seminar cultural functions were held in the evening which were highly appreciated by the participants and the audience.

In this year a departmental picnic was conducted successfully. All the examinations were held in time and results have been published within the scheduled period.

The volume contains valuable articles from eminent scholars of both India and abroad. We take the opportunity here to offer our sincere thanks and gratitude to our respected scholars for contributing their valuable research papers which enriched the Journal with their scholarly approach on different aspects of Pali and Indology and hope to receive their sympathetic cooperation in future.

Lastly we would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to Prof. Sugata Marjit Hon'ble Former Vice-Chancellor, University of Calcutta and heartfelt gratitude to present Vice-Chancellor Prof. Ashutosh Ghosh, Vice-Chancellor, University of Calcutta. Prof. Swagata Sen, Hon'ble Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Prof. Sonali Chakraborty Banerjee, Hon'ble Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Business Affairs & Finance and Prof. Soma Bandhopadhaya, Hon'ble Registrar of the University of Calcutta for their sincere help and encouragement for publication of this volume.

We further convey our sincere thanks to the Superintendent of the Calcutta University Press to publish this Journal within a very short period of time.

Department of Pali  
University of Calcutta

**Jayanti Chatterjee**

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## Spread of Buddhism in Ceylon (Sri Lanka)

**Bela Bhattacharya**

The Sinhalese chronicles record that King Asoka on the advice of Moggaliputta Tissa dispatched missions to the different parts of India and abroad to preach the teachings of Gotama Buddha. He sent his son Mahinda and attained the Arhatship (highest spiritual life) along with six other companions to propagate the Buddhist religion Ceylon (Sri Lanka). Among his companions were the theras—Itthiya, Uttiya, Sambala and Bhaddasala, Sumana Samanera, the son of Sanghamitta and Bhanduka Upasaka (lay disciple), the son of the daughter of his anunt. Devanampiyatissa, the second son of Mutasiva and the then King of Ceylon, who belonged to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.

The Pali chronicles refer to the first meeting of Mahinda and Devanampiya-Tissa, who was at the time busy with his hunting expedition and for this purpose he came to the Missaka-Pabbata which is known as Mihintale about eight miles to the east of Anuradhapura in Sri-Lanka.<sup>1</sup> It was on the full moon day of the month of Jettha Devanampiya-Tissa met Mahinda.

Devanampiya—Tissa knew the teaching-s of the Buddha from his friend Asoka, who was the Maurya ruler of Magada. Mahinda asked him several questions and he preached the Culahatthipadopamasutta to him<sup>2</sup>. This sutta deals with the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha and mentions how one is converted to Buddhism and accepts Buddhism in his Bhikkhu-life. It also says the noly life of a bhikkhu, the sublime qualities he obtains, several things which he abstains, thje attainment of his arahantship which can be mentioned as the highest fruit of Buddhism. It gives an account of the fundamental teachings of Buddhism. When he delivered his sermon, Devanampiya-Tissa and his people became glad and they embrached the religion of the Buddha<sup>3</sup>. At the invitation of the king, Mahinda and his people came to Anuradhapura where they were received by the king. After receiving meals at the royal house Mahinda described stories from two Pali texts, the Petavatthu and the Vimanavatthu to the ladies of the royal house, they tell the spirits of the dead in the Peta-world and in the deva-world, i.e., heavenly world according to theiur past karma. Mahinda also explained to

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Emeritus Professor of Pali, Department of Pali, Univerfsity of Calcutta

them the Four Noble Truths according to the Saccasamyutta. He also reminded them that Samsara was dreadful and also said about the cycle of births and deaths. He then delivered the Devadutasutta<sup>4</sup>, which speaks of the results of good and action, and the Balapandita sutta which mentions that foolish men do evil and for this reason suffer both in this world and hereafter. These suttas delivered by Mahinda helped the people of Sri Lanka to understand the teachings of the Buddha and they were able to develop their spiritual ideas properly. Mahinda then accepted the Mahameghavana or Mahameghapark from the king as his gift<sup>5</sup>.

The former then announced that Buddhism would be established in Sri Lanka. After the acceptance of the Mahamedhavana he then delivered the Aggikkhandhopama sutta<sup>6</sup> which refers to a bhikkhu's virtuous and holy life. The Dipavamsa and the Mahavamsa mention the establishment of Buddhism in Sri Lanka. They agree with Mahinda who told that Buddhism would be flourished in Sri Lanka after the establishment of a Sima for the uposatha and other acts of the Buddhist Sangha there<sup>7</sup>, these would be established according to the teachings of the Buddha.

Mahinda also delivered the Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta which discusses the Buddha's fundamental teachings<sup>8</sup>. From Anuradhapura he came to Missakapabbata to stay there for the vassa or the rainy season there<sup>9</sup>. Devanampiya-Tissa's nephew was Maha-Arittha, who was a minister. He with fifty-five people joined the Buddhist Sangha. The king presented Kantakacetiya for the use of Mahinda and other monks<sup>10</sup>. In the meantime Anula, the sub-queen, and her companions wanted to join the Buddhist Sangha and they informed it to the king<sup>11</sup>. King Devanampiya-Tissa then told his matter to Mahinda who requested the king to send a religious mission to the court of the Maurya ruler Asoka to invite the Theri Sanghamitta to come to the Island of Lanka with the branch of the Bodhi-tree.<sup>12</sup> Anula and her companions observed dasa-sila (ten precepts) before the arrival of Sanghamitta in the Upasika-Vihara which was constructed on one side of Anuradhapura<sup>13</sup>. At the suggestion of Mahinda, Devanampiya-Tissa built the Thuparama Dagaba for the collar-bone of the Buddha. This was the first Cetiya in Sri Lanka<sup>14</sup>. After the arrival of Sanghamitta, Anula and her companions joined the Buddhist Sangha<sup>15</sup>. They became the members of the Bhikkhuni Sangha, Sanghamitta lived in the Upasika Vihara which became known as the Hatthalhaka vihara or Bhikkhunupassaya<sup>16</sup>. She from India brought the Bodhi branch which was planted with great ceremony at Anuradhapura. In order to celebrate it monks from the north as well as from the south came to

### Spread of Buddhism in Ceylon (Sri Lanka)

Anuradhapura<sup>17</sup>. Under the patronage of Asoka on this occasion a large number of families visited the city<sup>18</sup>. Saplings which were grown from the seeds of the sacred Bodhi-tree were planted; in Anuradhapura and its neighbouring areas, in Jambukolapattana and in the village of Tivakka Brahmana in the North, in Kajaragama<sup>19</sup> (Kataragama) in the South and in Candanagama (Unidentified) under the patronage of Devanampiya-Tissa<sup>20</sup>. From the Mahavamsa we learn that about thirty-two saplings of the Bodhi tree were planted all over the Island<sup>21</sup>. The arrival of the sacred relics of the Buddha, the alms bowl of the Buddha, the Buddhist texts and the Bodhi tree from India<sup>22</sup> and the establishment of the Mahavihara<sup>23</sup> at Anuradhapura in the third century B.C. were regarded as important events which were closely connected with the introduction and development of Buddhism in Sri Lanka under Devanampiya Tissa's patronage. Thus Mahinda introduced Buddhism in Sri Lanka in the reign of Devanampiya-Tissa in the third century B.C.<sup>24</sup>. The king erected several monasteries besides the Mahavihara and the Cetiya-pabbata. He built the Issara-samana which was situated to the south of the city Vessagiri. But it is difficult to identify it. He also built the Pathamaka-Thupa. But it has not yet been identified. He constructed a public refectory called Mahapali in Anuradhapura for the Buddhist Sangha and also erected a Vihara Jambukolapattana in Nagaḍḍipa and also the Tissa-Mahavihara<sup>25</sup>.

Thus from religious accounts it is known that the religion of the Buddha was well-established in Sri Lanka under the patronage of Devanampiya-Tissa. Mahinda played a great role for its introduction and development. He told the Sinhalese king that Arittha who had the required conditions had joined the Buddhist Sangha after his return from India and he was well-versed in the Vinaya. Then he expounded the Vinaya in an assembly of monks at the Thuparama. Here he occupied a seat which was equal to that of Mahinda. The latter then informed the king that the religion was established in Sri Lanka because Arittha was born in Sri Lanka, his parents were at Sri Lanka, he studied the Vinaya well, learnt it and became well-versed in it and he expounded it very efficiently in Sri Lanka. Under Mahinda's guidance and inspiration the Buddhist Sangha of Sri Lanka became an independent and truly national institution.

Thus from traditional chronology; it is clear that Buddhism was introduced and established in Sri Lanka in the first year of the reign of Devanampiya-Tissa and it was the eighteenth year of the reign of the Maurya ruler Asoka. Thus 250 B.C. can be mentioned as the initial year of Devanampiya-Tissa. Mahinda died at the age of eighty at Cetiya-pabbata in

the eighth year of the reign of king Uttiya (200 B.C.), who was the younger brother of Devampiya-Tissa and was also the successor to the throne<sup>26</sup>. Sanghamitta also died in the ninth year of the reign of Uttiya at the Hatthalhaka nunery at Anuradhapura<sup>27</sup>. It is to be noted here that when Buddhism was introduced in Sri Lanka, there was no organised religion there and soon it began to spread in most parts of the country.

Mahinda and Sanghamitta stayed in the Island for aboutn forty-eight years and applied themselves untiringly for propagation of Buddhism there. Mahinda brought to Sri Lanka not only a new religion but also a whole civilization then at the height of its glory. He introduced art and architecture into the Island along with sangharmas and cetiyas. He can be regarded as the father of the Sinhalese literature. He made Sinhalese a literary language and inaugurated its literature. It is probable that he introduced the Asokan alphabet as well. Sanghamitta's contribution to the social life of women was also noteworthy. She moulded the life and character of women in Ceylon in various ways. Mahinda and Sanghamitta survived during the reign of King Devanampiyatissa when Buddhism made phenomenal progress in Ceylon. It was also firmly established there and spread rapidly to various parts of the country. Thus with the royal patronage and popular enthusiasm, Buddhism became the accepted religion of the Island.

'Devanampiya-Tissa's four brothers ascended the throne after him in succession at Anuradhapura and they played a great role for the progress of Buddhims in Sri Lanka.

It is to be noted here that Buddhism made a valuable contribution the life of the Sinhalese people. It was due to its important role the Sinhalese in peace and harmony tried to work seriously and for thisw reason Sri Lanka prospered.

Duttha-Gamani was the son of Kavanna-Tissa of Rohana. He was regarded as the greatest national hero of early Buddhist Sri Lanka.<sup>28</sup> He did his best to organise a great crusade to liberate Buddhims form foreign rule. he was able to establish Buddhism at the zenith of its glory. His war-cry was "Not for kingdom but for Buddhism."<sup>29</sup>

Under the inspiration of Buddhism and the Buddhist monks. Sri lanka was able to develop art, literature and other aspects of culture<sup>30</sup>.

Saddha-Tissa (77-79 B.C.) who was a brother of Duttha- Gamani, ascended the throne.

He acquired the epithet Saddha or pious or a great faith because he played a great role for the progress of Buddhism in Sri Lanka. He erected



## Spread of Buddhism in Ceylon (Sri Lanka)

many viharas there. The Dakkhinagiri-Vihara<sup>31</sup> at Anuradhapura was built in his time.

The latter part of the first century B.C. was an important period for the history of Buddhism in Sri Lanka. Tissa was a brahmin of Rohana of Southern Sri Lanka. He declared war against Vattagamani<sup>32</sup>. Seven Tamils from South India came to Mannar in Northern Sri Lanka with forces and attacked Anuradhapura. It is known from the history of Sri Lanka that five Tamils occupied the throne in succession at Anuradhapura for about fourteen years<sup>33</sup>.

There was a famine in Sri Lanka at this time. It was known as Brahmana Tissa famine or Baminitiya<sup>34</sup>. There was no food for the people of Sri Lanka and they ate the flesh of Buddhist monks. Many Buddhist monks and laymen died due to famine. Due to this famine many Buddhist monks arrived in India from Sri Lanka<sup>35</sup>.

After defeating the Tamils Vattagamani-Abhaya (29–17 B.C.) was able to recapture Anuradhapura after fourteen years. The Giri-monastery of the Niganthas (Jains) was demolished by him and he also erected the Abhayagiri-vihara<sup>36</sup>. He offered it to a Thera who was Mahatissa<sup>37</sup>. It is said that this Thera helped the king in the days of his misfortune. The king's five generals constructed five viharas and gave them to a Thera whose name was Tissa.

Dhammaruci of the Vijjiputra sect in India was a well-known figure in the religious history of Sri Lanka<sup>38</sup>. His disciples arrived in Sri Lanka from India and the monks of the Abhayagiri received them and gave them a warm welcome<sup>39</sup>. The monks of the Abhayagiri also became known as the Dhammaruci sect. They received this name after the name of the great teacher who belonged to India<sup>40</sup>. This new sect flourished in Sri Lanka under their patronage.

The next ruler was Coranaga (3 B.C. – 9 A.D.), the son of Vattagamani<sup>41</sup>. He was very much against the Buddhist Sangha. King Bhatikabhaya (38 – 66 A.D.) ruled in Sri Lanka for some time<sup>42</sup>. He was a religious person.

Vasabha (127–171 A.D.), who was a Lambakanna, patronised the Cetiyagiri and it flourished during his rule<sup>43</sup>. He constructed cetiyas and images and also repaired old monasteries and for the growth of Buddhism in his kingdom, he used to send preachers of dhamma in different parts of his kingdom.

He also built viharas in Nagadipa (modern Jaffna Peninsula) in the north of Sri Lanka<sup>44</sup>. He performed forty-four Vesak festivals. There was a great improvement in the civic, economic and health conditions of the Island.

The next important ruler was Voharika-Tissa. In his reign the Vatullavada

(skt. Vaitulayavada) appeared in the religious world of Sri Lanka<sup>45</sup>. Both the mahavihara and the Abhayagiri Vihara flourished under his patronage.

When Gothabhaya ascended the throne of Sri Lanka in the beginning of the fourth century A.D., the Vetullavada appeared again in Sri Lanka. Gothabhaya was a powerful ruler. He played a great role for the development of Buddhism in his kingdom and Buddhism flourished there.

Sanghamitra came to Sri Lanka from India during this time and Mahasena (332–362 A.D.) patronised her after his accession to the throne<sup>46</sup>. the former came to Sri Lanka with an idea of introducing and developing Mahayanism in the Island. Gothabhaya gave her a warm welcome and placed his two sons Jettha-tissa and Mahasena for their education under her care. When Jettha-tissa took the throne after his father's death, Sanghamitra did not stay in Sri Lanka and she left it in fear. But she came back to the Island when Mahasena ascended the throne of Sri Lanka<sup>47</sup>. Mahasena was a very powerful ruler and he contributed largely to the development of the country. He was a staunch follower of Sanghamitra and he tried to suppress the activities of the Mahavihara. Sanghamitra used to stay at the Abhayagiri Vihara and played a great role to convert the Mahavihara to Mahayanism<sup>48</sup>.

Sirimeghavanna<sup>49</sup>, the elder son of Mahasena, took the throne in 362 A.D. He felt so sorry for his father's attitude towards the Mahavihara and he did a great job for the welfare of the Mahavihara. He played a great role for the progress and development of the Mahavihara in his reign. He made a golden statue of Mahinda and a festival was held under his patronage and a procession took place for several days to commemorate the arrival of Mahinda<sup>50</sup>.

An important event took place during the reign of this king. The left eye-tooth of the Buddha was brought to Sri Lanka from Dantapura in Kalinga in the ninth year of the king<sup>51</sup>.

the next ruler was Buddhadasa. He was the son of Jetthatissa II. He ascended the throne in the beginning of the fifth century A.D.<sup>52</sup>

In the reign of Buddhadasa, Mahadhammakathi, a great thera for the first time translated the Pali suttas into Sinhalese<sup>53</sup>. The next ruler was Upatissa I, who was a son of Buddhadasa. In his reign a new festival called Gangarohana was held in order to overcome a famine which appeared in the fifth century A.D.<sup>54</sup>

Upatissa I's brother was Mahanama (410–432). He was a monk but he gave up his monk life and occupied the throne after So Upatissa had been killed by his queen<sup>55</sup>. Mahanama was a great patron of the Abhayagirivihara<sup>56</sup> and his queen played her great role for the development of the Mahavihara.

## Spread of Buddhism in Ceylon (Sri Lanka)

After Mahanama, Sri Lanka was in trouble for about twenty five years. Six Tamil rulers came to power in Sri Lanka in succession at Anuradhapura. Due to them Buddhism suffered very much. Many Sinhalese families came to Rohana at this time<sup>57</sup>. Dhatusena Practically fought with the Tamils and was able to liberate the country from the foreign rule. He was a monk. But he gave up his monk life and did a good job by re-establishing the Sinhala rule. Under his patronage, Buddhism flourished and he worked hard for the welfare of the country<sup>58</sup>. He was a devout follower of the Mahavihara.

Several statues of the Buddha and the Bodhisattva were built by him and new houses for them were constructed<sup>59</sup>. An image of Mahinda was established by him and a festival was held and on this occasion the Dipavamsa was recited<sup>60</sup>. The new ruler was Kassapa I (478–496 A.D.). He built a vihara for the Dhammarucikas<sup>61</sup>.

The beginning of the sixth century A.D. is an important period for the history of Buddhism in Sri Lanka. During the reign of Moggallana I (496–513 A.D.) a purification of the Buddhist Sangha took place<sup>62</sup>. In his reign the Hair-Relic of the Buddha the Kesadhatu was brought to Sri Lanka from India. Skilakala brought it from India. It was kept in crystal casket in an image house and a great festival was held on this occasion<sup>63</sup>.

Moggallana's son was Kumara-Dhatusena (513–522 A.D.). He purified the Buddhist sangha and a Dhammasangiti or "recital of the sacred texts" was held<sup>64</sup>. The next ruler was Silakala (524–537 A.D.) He did not allow to kill animals in the Island, and established hospitals<sup>65</sup> and performed many meritorious works which helped to develop the growth of Buddhism in his kingdom<sup>66</sup>.

The new ruler was Culla-Moggallana or Moggallana II (537–556 A.D.). He contributed largely to the development of Buddhism. The next ruler was Aggabodhi I<sup>67</sup> (568–601 A.D.). He did some works for the development of the religion of the Buddha under the instruction and advice of Dathasiva Mahathera<sup>68</sup>. Aggabodhi II ruled in Sri Lanka from A.D. 601 to A.D. 611<sup>69</sup>. He gave a good service for the Abhaygiri Vihara and Jetavanavihara.

Dathopatisa II (659–667 A.D.) wanted to do something for the prosperity of the Abhay-Vihara.

The next important ruler was Aggabodhi IV (667–674 A.D.)<sup>70</sup>, who was the younger brother of Dathapatissa II. He was a devout follower of Buddhism. All the three Nikayas<sup>71</sup> of Sri Lanka were able to flourish under the noble patronage of the king who showed his keen interest in the affairs of Buddhism<sup>72</sup>.

It is known from the Culavamsa that under the patronage of Aggabodhi VIII (766 - 772 A.D.) the Buddhist Sangha was purified and he showed his keen interest in the development of the three Nikayas.

Vijayabahu I made an important contribution to the religious world of Sri Lanka and Buddhism reached the zenith of its glory in reign of Vijayabahu I<sup>73</sup>.

It is known that Vijayabahu I erected a tooth -relic temple to the north of his own palace grounds<sup>74</sup>. He constructed several new vihara in Polonnaruwa<sup>75</sup>. He also renovated many decayed and damaged Buddhist temples and he granted villages for their maintenance.

"The fifth century A.D. was a period of great importance in the history of Buddhist thought in Ceylon, It was during the reign of king Buddhadasa, the famous Chinese pilgrim Fa-hien came to Ceylon. He stayed at the Abhayagirivihara in Ceylon. According to him there were five thousand monks at the Abhayagirivihara as against three thousand in the Mahavihara. His account indicates that the Abhayagirivihara was flourishing at that time. Towards the middle of the fifth century A.D., the famous commentator Buddhaghosa visited Ceylon. He was born in a Brahmin family near Bodhi-Gaya and converted to Buddhism by Mahathera Revata. At the suggestion of his teacher he came to Ceylon and took up his residence in the Mahavihara at Anuradhapura. He translated the Atthakathas (commentaries) on the Tipitaka from Sinhalese into Pali. His well-known work, the Visuddhimagga, is the first work written in Ceylon. It shows his vast erudition, keen intellect and deep insight. It is divided into three parts dealing with Sila (rules of conduct), Samadhi (meditation) and Panna (wisdom) and is indeed "a summary of the three Pitakas with the commentary. There were other Indian scholars like Buddhadatta and Dhammapala who wrote additional commentaries and other works which contributed much to the enrichment of the Pali Literature"<sup>76</sup>.

From the sixth to the eleventh century A.D. Ceylon suffered a great deal due to Indian invasion and internal disruption and consequently the progress of Buddhism was thereby greatly disturbed. With a view to evading the disturbance the capital of Ceylon was removed from Anuradhapura to Polonnaruwa. Buddhism degenerated remarkably during this period. King Vijayabahu I ascended the throne after defeating the Cola invaders in 1072 A.D. With his accession to the throne Buddhism came to life once again in Ceylon. He devoted his time to reform the Buddhist Sangha which had fallen to decay during the period of war and foreign rules<sup>77</sup>.

### **Spread of Buddhism in Ceylon (Sri Lanka)**

In the history of Buddhism in Ceylon the period between the death of Vijayabahu I and the ascendancy of Parakkamabahu I (1153-1186 A.D.) may be regarded as dark chapter.

The Culavamsa records that when Parakkamabahu the Great came to the throne a period of prosperity and cultural progress followed and under royal patronage Ceylo established itself again as a centre of Theravada Buddhism. He can be regarded as one o the greatest kings of Ceylon, and his reign may be taken as a glorious one for man; reasons. In the history of Buddhism in Ceylon he played an important role and made valuable contribution to Buddhism by unifying the Sangha. He extended his whole hearted support to the revival of Buddhism in the island. With the death o Parakkamabahu Great, Ceylon witnessed much internal trouble due to rivalry to thi throne and foreign invasion and as a consequence Buddhism fell into neglect again. But with the advent of kings like Vijayabahu II (1186-87 A.D.) Nissalikaamalla (1189-1195 A.D.), Parakkamabahu II (C. 1240) and Parakkamabahu VI (1412-68 A.D.) Buddhism received a new impetus. They were all zealous devotees of Buddhism and their efforts! were largely responsible for the development of Buddhism and Buddhist Sangha in Ceylon. They all patronised the Buddhist scholars and religious institutions. Man) religious edifices were also constructed during their reign. Thus their reign in Ceylor may be regarded as an important epoch in the history of Buddhism.

At present there are three sects or Nikayas prevalent in Ceylon, viz., the Siyama Nikaya, Amarapura Nikaya and Ramanna Nikaya which are named after the countries from which the ceremony of Upasampada (ordination) was introduced to Ceylon. The Siyama Nikaya came into existence in Ceylon in the reign of Kirti Sri Rajasimha who occupied the throne of Kandy in the eighteenth century A.D. The Amarapura Nikaya was established later on in Kandy by Dhammajyoti who was ordained at Amarapura in Burma. The Ramanna Nikaya was, however, founded by Ambagahawatte Sri Saranankara and Puvakadandave Sri . Pannananda. The Siyama Nikaya only admits those who belong to the higher caste, and enjoins that their monks should wear upper robe over one shoulder only, while the Amarapura admits those belonging to the first three castes, and enioins that their monks should cover their both shoulders. No rivalry now exists between the monks of these two Nikayas. Monks of each sect are warmly received in , the monastery of other sects. The Ramanna Nikaya is, however, more recent and is rather a reformed Nikaya. It lays much emphasis on the rules of morality, and is against the possession of property by the monastery. But all these Nikaya, belong to

orthodox Theravada. There exist no doctrinal differences among them. They, however, differ on the interpretation of certain Vinaya rules.

“In order to understand the extent of the influence of Buddhism on Ceylon’s culture, we must have a clear picture of the role played by the Buddhist temple in the country. Such temples and monasteries are not only places of worship and religious services, but centres of learning and culture as well. Every Buddhist temple, in addition to being a place of religious worship, has also a free school, and the bhikkhus (Buddhist monks) living in the temple were always teachers. Great monastic establishments such as the Mahavihara and the Abhaygiri at Anuradhapura were universities like the Nalanda Mahavihara in India. The whole of education was in the hands of bhikkhus. They taught not only religious subjects, but also the secular arts and sciences - languages, grammar, prosody, rhetoric, logic history, medicine, astrology, architecture, painting, sculpture etc. which had to be studied by everyone from prince down to peasant. Even hospitals were attached to these large monastic establishments, not only for the treatment of the sick but also for the training of physicians.

Whatever the curriculum, the educational background was Buddhist. Thus every student was taught the fundamental principles of Buddhism; ethical and moral precepts and ideas such as respect for life; love for living beings; devotion and regard for parents and elders; duties towards family, relatives and friends; righteous living; freedom of thought, toleration etc. the Buddhist temple still is the centre of the village life, and the bhikkhu in the temple is the friend philosopher and guide of the villagers”<sup>78</sup>.

“The Mahavamsa, the Great Chronicle of the Island of Ceylon, was composed by a Buddhist monk named Mahanama in the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.C. this Chronicle has been continued up to the present century at different periods by Buddhist monks.

The Portuguese who occupied some coastal regions of the Island from the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century for about 150 years, were extremely intolerant and violently opposed to Buddhism.

By the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, with the help of the Sinhala Buddhist King, the Dutch ousted the Portuguese and occupied the maritime provinces for about 138 years. The Dutch, too, continued the same policy of suppressing Buddhism and national Buddhist culture.

Towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (1796 A.C.) the English got rid of the Dutch and occupied the whole island by 1815.

Thus during a period of nearly four and a half centuries three European

## Spread of Buddhism in Ceylon (Sri Lanka)

powers - the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British - tried to destroy, undermine and weaken Buddhism and Sinhala Buddhist culture and to introduce Christianity, Christian education and culture. To a considerable extent they succeeded in their effort, particularly in coastal regions and urban areas.

In 1880 Colonel H.S. Olcott, an American Theosophist came to Ceylon, embraced Buddhism and started a vigorous campaign to revive Buddhism, and Buddhist education and culture. With the help of the leading Buddhist monks at the time such as Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala, Battarmulle, Sri Subhuti, Migettuwatte Gunananda, Koratota Sobhita, etc. He established the Buddhist Theosophical Society and opened up hundreds of Buddhist schools throughout the country. Anagrika Dharmapala, the great national leader and Buddhist missionary of Ceylon, a product of this movement, not only continued this work in the island, but also carried it over to India and other countries in Asia, Europe and America<sup>79</sup>.

"In 1948 Ceylon gained its political independence. Since that time there has been a wide national awakening and a great revival of Buddhism and Buddhist culture. Numerous big and small Buddhist societies and organizations for social and cultural development have been formed throughout the island. Hundreds of Daham pasal (special religious schools to teach Buddhism and Buddhist culture to children) have been established. National and Buddhist traditions, institutions and customs which had been scorned and ignored have been scorned and ignored have been revived and encouraged. Buddhism is again exercising a great influence on the social, political and cultural life of the people of Ceylon (Sri Lanka).

Lastly, in Ceylon about seventy percent of its present population profess Buddhism. Its culture is thus predominantly Buddhist<sup>80</sup>.

## Notes and References :

1. Walpola Rahula, History of Buddhism in Ceylon, p-50. It is to be noted here that Mihinlale became known by the name Cetiya-pabbata or Cetiya-giri at that time when the commentaries were written. Missakapabbata was Cetiya-pabbata and this is modern Mihinlale (Mahinda-Thala). Here Mahinda gave his first sermon. Many shrines were erected there (Mahavamsa, tr. p-114, f.n. 3). This Missakapabbata or Cetiya-pabbata contained three peaks. The Ambatthaladagaba occupied its place just below it. This Ambatthala had been identified with the Therambatthala of the Visuddhimagga and this was the place where the Mahorohanagutta used to live (Visuddhimagga, I, 55; II 375; Mahavamsa tr. p-90, f.n. 1). There were many caves in the Missakapabbata and one of the caves was known as Mahindaguha, "Cave of Mahinda". Buddhaghosa refers to Hatthikucchipabbhara and Mahindaguha as places for meditation. The Papancasudani describes the name of another cave at

Cetiya-pabbata and this was Piyangy. From the very beginning Cetiya-pabbata occupied a very prominent place in the religious world of Sri Lanka. Here Mahinda used to stay during the first rainy season. Here a sapling from the seeds of the branch of the Bodhi-tree which was brought by sanghamitta was planted a 'Forty li to the east of the No-Fear shrine, there is the sacred mountain and Mahinda died here, from the commentaries we learn that the thera Mahiyadeva used to live in the Cetiya-pabbata during the reign of Dutthagamani and here he delivered the Chachakkasutta and about sixty theras obtained Arahantship. The Thera Kala Buddharakkhita used to live here in the reign of Saddha-tissa, the brother of Dutthagamani. It is said that the king used to observe the Uposatha-sila or the eight precepts in this vihara during the reign of Kutakanna tissa. Cetiya-pabbata occupied an important place as a prominent centre of Buddhism in the reign of Bhatiya (A.D. 38 -66). King Mahadathika Mahanaga was a successor of Bhatiya and in his time a great festival called the gribhandapuja was held at the Cetiya-pabbata. Even Fa Hien, the Chinese traveller refers to the Cetiya-pabbata. He states "Forty li to the east of no-fear shrine there is the sacred. She state, Mihintale, with a shrine on it called Bhadraka, in which there are about two thousand priests, among them is a Shaman, the Reverend Dharmagupta, whom all the people of this country respect and look up to. He was dwelt in a stone cell for more than forty years; and by constant exercise of kindness of heart he has succeeded in so influencing snakes and rats that they will live together in the same cell without hurting one another." (H.A. Giles; Travels of Fa Hien, pp.71.72) E.W. Adikaram, Early History of Buddhism in Ceylon, Colombo, 1953, pp. 102-104.

2. Ibid, p. 50; Dipavamsa. Chap-XII. V-52, Mahavamsa. Chap-XIV,V22.
3. Dipavamsa, Ch-XII, V.54;Mahavamsa,Ch-XIV.V.23 4 Mahavamsa, Ch,XIV, V-63;MaiJhiinamikaya,Ch.III,p.191.
5. Mahavamsa, Ch,XIV,w.pp. 14- 15 and pp.24-25.
6. Ibid Ch. XV. p.276.
7. DipavmsaCh XIV, pp.2 1-25.
8. Mahavamsa Ch. XV, p. 199.
9. Ibid. Ch. XVI, pp. 2ff.
10. Ibid. p. 12.
11. Walpola Rahula, History of Buddhism in Ceylon, p.57.
12. Mahavamsa, Ch. XVIII, Iff.
13. Ibid,pp.9-12.
14. Ibid, p. 15.
15. Ibidp.65.
16. Ibid pp 69-71.
17. Ibid p.54.
18. Ibid pp. 1-4.
19. Kajaragama (now Ktaragama) was situated ten miles to the North of Tisamaharama.
20. History of Buddhism in Ceylon, E.W. Adikaram pp. 60-62.
21. Ibid pp. 63-64.
22. Ibid pp. 29-30.



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- 23 The Mahavihara was mentioned as the most important and the biggest Monastery at Anuradhapura. It used to preserve the teachings of Theravada Buddhism, History of Buddhism in Ceylon, E.W. Adikaram, p. 105.
24. Ibid p. 13.
26. Ibid pp. 29-33, Dīpavamsa, p.95.
27. Ibid, pp. 48-50.
- 28 Walpola Rahula, History of Buddhism in Ceylon, p.79.
29. Mahavamsa, p.2.
30. Hazra K.L., History of Theravada Buddhism in South East Asia, P. 50.
31. Mahavamsa, p.7.
32. Walpola Rahula, History of Buddhism in Ceylon, p.81.
33. Ibid, p 81.
34. Walpola Rahula, History of Buddhism in Ceylon, p 81.
35. Ibid, p.81.
36. Mahavamsa, pp. 78-81.
37. Walpola Rahula, History of Buddhism in Ceylon, p.82
38. Ibid, p.84.
- 39 Ibid, p.84.
40. Ibid, p.82.
41. Ibid, p.85.
42. Ibid, p.86.
43. Ibid, p.87.
44. Ibid, 45 Ibid.
46. Mahavamsa pp. 112-13.
47. Ibid, pp 1-3.
48. Walpola Rahula, History of Buddhism in Ceylon, p.93.
49. Ibid p.96.
50. Ibid.
51. Mahavamsa p. 92, Dathavamsa, p. 340.
52. Walpola Rahula, History of Buddhism in Ceylon, p.97.
- 53 Culavamsa, p. 175.
54. Walpola Rahula. History of Buddhism in Ceylon, p.98
55. Ibid, p.98.
56. Culavamsa, pp.212-213.
57. Walpola Rahula, History of Buddhism in Ceylon, p.99.
58. Ibid, p.99.
59. Culavamsa, pp. 6-62, 65-68, 78.
60. Ibid, pp. 58-59.
61. Ibid, pp. 15.
62. Ibid, pp. 57.
63. Ibid, pp. 44 - 56.
64. Ibid, pp. 1-2.
65. Ibid, pp. 28-30.

66. Walpola Rahula, History of Buddhism in Ceylon, p. 101.
67. Culavamsa, p. 13.
68. Ibid p. 14.
69. Walpola Rahula, History of Buddhism in ceylon, p. 103.
70. Ibid, p. 107.
71. The Three Nikayas were the Mahavihara, the Abhayagirivihara and the Jetavana.
72. Culavamsa, p. 13.
73. Culavamsa L.X., 8.
74. C.W. Nicholas and S. Pannavitana, A Concise History of ceylon, p. 194.
75. Ibid.pp.194-195.
76. Baaojee A.C. Bodhtsm in India and Abroad, p. 189.
77. Ibid, pp. 189-190.
78. Ahir D.C., Buddhism in South East Asia, pp.62-63.
79. Ibid, pp. 64-66.
80. Ibid, pp. 66-67.

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# Pratityasamutpadastutisubhasitahridayam by Acharya Tsongkhapa—a Close Reading

**Ramesh Chandra Mukhopadhyaya**

Acharya Tsong khapa hailed from the onion valley of Tibet. He showed up in the 14th century. At the age of three he took the lay vow and at the age of seven he was ordained as a sramanera. Karmapa Lama praised him in the following verse.

When the teachings of the Sakya, Kagyue, Kadam.  
And Nyingma sects in Tibet were declining,  
You, O Tsong Khapa, revived Buddha's Doctrine,  
Hence I sing this praise to you of Ganden Mountain

Acharya Tsongkhapa was chiefly influenced by the Kadam school of Atisha. But he was conversant with all the other schools of thought prevalent in Tibet during his time. He had personal experience of the different deities and he often discussed with Manjusree on difficult issues. His works consist of 18 volumes. They touch upon every branch of Buddhist thought with great insight. In this paper we propose a close reading of his praise of Dependent Origination or Pratitya samutpada subhasita hridayam a poem consisting of 58 slokas. With us Pratitya samutpada stuti subhasita hridayam of Acharya Tsongkhapa translated into English by Gyaltsen Namdol and Ngawang Samten published by Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies Sarnath Varanasi in 1994 is the text.

The poem opens with a praise of Manjughosa. Manju means beautiful and mellifluous. Manju ghosa is one whose voice is mellifluous. Manjushri or Sweet Glory is the bodhisattva of wisdom and he is often addressed by the poets at the outset of their works. Manjusree is the Muse of Tibetan poetry. Here Tsongkhapa addresses Manjughosa at the outset of his poem. Poetry, as Mallarme put it, is written with words and not with ideas. In other words sounds are more important in poetry. Poetry is primarily meant to be heard. Hence the praise of Manjughosa at the outset of the praise of Dependant Origination. The poet describes Manjughosa as the victor and the peerless knower and teacher. This puts in our mind the icon of Manjughosa. Manjughosa has a flaming sword in the right hand and a book in the left hand. With the flaming sword he kills ignorance and dispels fears of perdition among sentient beings. With the book he

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spreads wisdom. With the poet knowledge is not a matter concerned with intellect. One sees it with his senses. Unless one is a visionary one is not wise. Hence the poet posits that Manjughosa has seen and expounded Dependent Origination. When we see a philosophical truth in verbal appearance it is no longer a treatise on philosophy. When ideas are felt through senses it becomes poetry. So we are in the threshold of a philosophical poem.

When the poet praises Manjughosa for expounding the theory of Dependent Origination the curiosity of the readers, to know what the theory of Dependent Origination is, escalates.

The theory of Dependent Origination posits that nothing whatever in the existence is independent of other things and beings in the universe. Descartes the western philosopher defined substance as something which is independent of other things in the existence. Descartes speaks of the existence of substance. But our poet says no to it. In the light of Dependent Origination no such substance could be there.

Here we could dwell on a little on the theory of cause and effect. Apparently the cause is an event that invariably precedes the event known as effect. If the effect is not there the cause would not be there. If there is the effect the cause must have been there. If the cause is absent the effect cannot show up. Of course this reminds us of Assaji

Ye dharma hetuprabhavaa hetun  
Tesaam tathaagato hyavadat  
Tesaam cha yo nirodha  
Evam vaadi mahaasramana  
Any phenomenon whatever springs from causes  
Tathagata has delineated those causes

And we must keep in mind that no one cause is responsible for an effect. In fact numerous causes and conditions are responsible for an effect. A seed sown is not enough cause for a plant to grow. The seed must be healthy and not affected by micro-organism. The soil must be fertile. There must be congenial rainfall and temperature for the seed to sprout and grow into a plant. Domestic animals and insects must not destroy the plant and so on. Now each one of the above conditions is the result of numerous other conditions. And so on. Thus one might argue that even the farthest galaxy in the space is also responsible for the smallest and the so called most insignificant event under the sun. Thus everything in the multiverse is dependent on one another. All wholes are dependent on parts and the parts are always dependent on wholes. Also any event is dependent on mundane convention. That we impose our concepts on the events we perceive.

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In other words our minds also play a great role in perceiving a world where dependent origination operates. Now if anything depends on any other thing it does not have any essence. A thing which has essence cannot be subject to change. Since no such thing is possible nothing in the phenomenal world has essence. Hence the phenomenal world is empty. This is non affirmative negation It does not say that the world does not exist. Again it does not say that the world exists.

Also things are neither completely nonexistent  
Nor do they exist essentially(verse 13)

The seer Tsongkhapa's non affirmative negation unlike the syllogistic approach of Svatantrika school loads his poem with the wealth of measureless suggestions and ambiguity. And as Empson points out ambiguities are sine qua non with poetry.

And with the poet whatever is dependent on another could have no essence. Everything in the existence is empty of any perennial content. The word empty should be noted here with special care.

The theory of Dependent Origination is a miracle of the highest kind. Because this at once shatters the commonsense world. Since the origin of every thing and every being is dependent on other things, there is no man, no tree. no god . no passion, no emotion that is omnipotent omnibenevolent or omniscient. There is no knowledge which is absolute. There is no value which is absolute. We are ourselves chained by our desires and blinded by ignorance. We are prisoners of situations and conditions. We seek freedom. But is it worthwhile to worship another person be it a god or a man or a notion which is also a prisoner of situations and the existence of which depends on some conditions? A limited person cannot get rid of his limitation by way of worshipping another limited being. And curiously enough this world view turns the world of senses empty of essence in a flash. We are hollow men we are stuffed men. The yonder tree, the distant hills ---they are no longer real. The woman I love is not real. The woman I hate is not real. The woman I worship is not real. We are as it were circumscribed by a world of shadows where phantasmagoric visions crowd. There is nothing real here. This realization is sure to fling us into despair apparently. Because in the world ruled by Dependent Origination there is nothing that we can cling to. There is no stay.

The children however cling to the shadows as real. So do we grown up men and women. The children are fond of extremes. The grandmother who gave them a good turn is an angel with them. The Maths teacher who rebuked them once for not being attentive is a devil. We are like children. We are also fond of extremes .Either we cling to the notion of a soul or substance that is peren-

nial and that cannot be torn by weapons that cannot be burnt by fire, that cannot be dried up by the air or that cannot be drenched by water. Or else we posit that there is nothing called soul or substance no value judgments and so on. Consequently we can be carried away by Lucretian pleasure and revel in eating drinking and merry making. Thus we fall in the magic net of sufferings. We cut it here and it grows up there. But the wise can see into the world of appearance and cut the net. The escapes from Plato's cave as it were.

True that since everything whatever is dependent on numerous other things and since everything consequently has no essence we the average run of men live in a world of shadows where nothing is real But at the same time the world of shadows or the appearance has a great functional value. Those who cling to the shadows as real suffer because of their ignorance. But those who see into the shadows and realise that they are but shadows and not real get rid of the sufferings that are sine qua non with mortal existence. In that context the world of shadows are not as unreal as a barren woman's child. The world of shadows an epiphenomenon of dependent origination does exist functionally. So truly speaking we have nothing to despair of when we learn that we are born into a world of shadows. Because once we know shadows to be shadows we need not be attached to them but we can play with them.

The poet claims that this theory of dependent origination is found nowhere else but Buddhism. Hence Lord Buddha is the only teacher. And once we are taught that the world of appearance is a delusion we can humor it but we cannot be prey to it. Hence the theory of dependent origination is of great benefit to mankind.

But there might be arguments against the theory of dependent origination. The theory might seem to be self- contradictory. Because as the poet himself points out, there can be neither act in emptiness nor emptiness in agent (verse 12). True.

What is an act? It is a deed or a thing done. In that case there must be an agent who acts. True. Suppose, we see a thing. Then there must have been a thing to be seen. There must be one who sees the thing. There must be a contact between the thing seen and the eye of the person who sees. But how could such acts take place if everything were empty? If there were no eye to see and no object to be seen. To imagine a world without acts and agent is as it were to leap into the abyss from the steep rock of despair.

Thus the poet posits that although we say that action if any is empty of essence and agent if any is empty of essence it does not necessarily mean that every act in the world of eye and ear takes place in emptiness and emptiness is in the agent.

**Pratityasamutpadastutisubhasitahridayam by Acharya Tsongkhapa...**

What the poet of a philosopher Tsongkhapa employs in his parole is non affirming negation. If we say that a certain person should not drink tea does it necessarily mean that he should drink coffee or cocoa or some fruit juice? We are simply negating the consumption of tea under certain circumstances. Similarly the poet employs the word empty in a certain context.

The poet says that whatever is dependent on conditions is empty of essence and whoever sees emptiness as dependent origination the reality of act and agent and their being empty of nature are not contradictory to him.

Well the expression "essence" might remind us of the doctrine of essentialism and Plato. Essentialism implies that there are certain attributes without which a thing cannot be what it is. With Plato all things and concepts have an essential reality behind them. But with our poet nothing has any essence or permanent attribute. Had a permanent attribute been present in a thing the thing would not be subject to change and decay. The existence of anything whatever depends upon numerous things. Everything whatever is an agglomeration of certain other elements and those elements are in turn agglomeration of certain other elements and so on. Hence the essence of a thing is nowhere found. Even dharma has no essence.

If there were a perennial dharma one would remain ever under its weight  
and one can never unburden himself to be a Buddha.

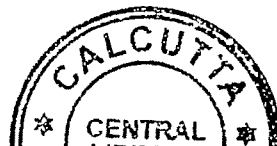
If there were any essence of dharma

Neither could Nirvana be attained

Nor could manifestation be reversed. (verse 16)

Because nothing changes a thing that has essence. If change were not possible life divine cannot be realized. Essentialists are very negative thinkers. In the light of essentialism the world will remain what it is, warlord and strife torn, nasty brutish and dull. But the seer Tsongkhapa who does not pin his faith on essentialism tells the humanity that right view can transform the world. Thus the very theory of Dependent Origination which earlier seemed to us as pessimistic is at bottom optimistic charging with hopes of a brave new world. Buddhism by the by is a practical religion and philosophy that asserts that everybody could be a Buddha and everybody is potentially a Buddha.

The poet posits that the notion of an independent dharma is a sky flower. It is impossible to realize the notion of an independent dharma. If any dharma were self evident and not dependent on anything else it would negate the notion of causality. We remember Asvaji in this conte. Every phenomenon has a cause. And to imagine that dharma is uncaused is foolish indeed. No dharma is there on its own. A dharma comes into existence in dependence on other dharmas.



But the poet observes that there is no contradiction between. The non existence of essence. And that this arises depending upon that. The phenomenal world loud with madding crowd's ignoble strife is a spectacle where dependent origination operates. But the same phenomenal world is revealed to the wise and seer as empty. That is two truths are there. Every nominally or conventionally given phenomenon has dual nature – the nominal and the ultimate. The nominal nature deludes. The ultimate nature rescues us from delusion. The Middle Path is to be true to both – to be true to the kindred points of heaven and home. Dependent Origination is the reason for not relying on extreme views(verse 19)The temptation to overemphasize or to minimize the reality of observables and unobservable is eliminated.(verse 29).

This could be a manifesto of aesthetics as well. Any poem has a conventional level of meaning and another level of meaning which beckons us to the beyond.

However this philosophical poetry is wrapped up in a cover that speaks of influence of the predecessors. The poet does not claim that he reveals anything new. Whatever he says has been inspired by the miraculous teaching of Lord Buddha. The water lily garden of Nagarjuna has decoded or annotated Lord Buddha's exhortation correctly abandoning the extremes is and is not( verse49) The garden is alight with the soothing moonbeams of Chandrakirti(verse 50).

The poem has an autobiographical element. Charged with the quest for the real the poet went through many realms of learning. But such wide wanderings in the many realms of knowledge could not satisfy the poet. On the contrary he was rather tormented (verse 48) The kindness of the poet's preceptor however eased the mind of the poet. (verse 51) No wonder that it was the guru who introduced the theory of Dependent Origination to the poet. But a poet cannot be satisfied with the realization of the truth. He laments that he could not hear the Buddha. He addresses Lord Buddha and exclaims—Alas that I did not hear the Dharma from you.(verse 42)Thus the philosophical poem turns into a devotional one. The poet dedicates merit if any of the poem to all beings so that get in touch with competent guru who can lead them to light from encircling gloom(verse54).

Thus the poem ends with a benediction

In the light of modern aesthetics we must say that the poem is postmodern and not logocentric in its approach. Furthermore absence is a significant motif here though it is kept in suggestion.



# Philosophical Background of Upanisadic thought & Buddhism

Manikuntala Haldar (De)

The Sixth century B.C. witnessed the emergence of Buddhism, which eventually became one of the greatest International religious orders. A survey of various conditions and the trends of thought midst of which it originated is a necessity for the proper understanding and appreciation of Buddhism. According to Sir. M. M. William<sup>1</sup> the progress of Indian religious thought can be registered through three successive stages-Vedicism, Brahmanism and Hinduism. However, a true Hindu of the orthodox school is able quite conscientiously to accept all these developments of religious beliefs viz, (i) the four Vedas-Ṛgveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda, Atharvaveda and the Bāhmanas (ii) the Upaniṣads (iii) the Law books of Manu (iv) the Bhaktiśāstras including the Rāmāyana, the Mahābhārata, the Purāṇas specially the Bhagavat Purāṇa and the Bhagavat Gītā and (v) the Tantras.<sup>2</sup> The chief works under these five heads, represent the principal periods of religious development through which the Hindu mind had passed.

Now, in the development of religious beliefs, the hymns of the Vedas and the ritualism of the Brāhmaṇas represent the worship of the personified forces of nature-a form of religion which ultimately brought sacrificial ideas with ceremonialism and asceticism. Then the Upaniṣads represent the pantheistic conception i.e., belief in god, god in everywhere and everything is god.<sup>3</sup> After that, the Law-books deal with caste-system and domestic usages. Next, the Rāmāyana, Mahābhārata and Purāṇas represent with principle of personal devotion to the gods and lastly the Tantras represent the perversion of the principles of life and degrading practices disguised under the name of religious rites.

Among those five phases of religious beliefs, probably the first three only prevailed when Buddhism emerged. But it is noteworthy that a large body of the Hindus was unorthodox in respect of their interpretation of the leading doctrine of true Brahmanism. Moreover, the cult of sacrifice which developed out of the prayers in the Vedic Saṁhitās had powerful hold on the minds of the early Aryans in India. The elaborate rituals of the cult was said

to be responsible for doctrines which challenged the very existence of the cult. Although according to a passage in the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, the cult of sacrifice although looked upon as a ship to take one across to the other shore of existence to the heavenly world, was itself shaky and unsafe.<sup>4</sup> In another passage, it was said that the merit accordingly from its performance, was of short duration. The calculation was that the cult of sacrifice did not lead a person to eternal peace, but to a life of perpetual plex. So Vedic literature is replete with references to many problems which are mostly on speculative views rather than problems connected with the recent life such as, origin of the world or universe and to its constituents. So the early thinkers pointed out that life was short and a sacrificial performance could bring only temporary happiness. They said that those rituals could not mean eternal joy, on the contrary, those might sometimes be a source of much unhappiness. Again, early thinkers said that if that was so, it was necessary to discover the source of eternal peace.

However, it may be said that religious growth of many centuries cannot be a simple and transparent creed admitting of easy definition and classification.<sup>5</sup> It is seen that the word 'deva' is used to indicate many different things such as, as god (the creator of whole world), as learned person (who impart knowledge to fellow man), as a lady (the kneader and guardian of the loaf). The sun, the moon and the sky were also considered as the 'devas' because they give light to all creations.<sup>6</sup> Prof. Radhakrishnan said that father, mother and spiritual guides are also 'devas'. Actually, the process of god-making cannot be seen so clearly anywhere else as in the *R̥gveda*. The moon and the stars, the sea and the sky, the dawn and the nightfall were all regarded as devine. The worship of nature as such, is the earliest form of Vedic religion.<sup>7</sup> So it may be conjectured that the Aryans of the Vedic period had faith in the reality of an unseen world. 'Naturalism' and anthropomorphism are seen to be the first stages of the Vedic religion.<sup>8</sup>

Historically, the Vedic Aryans and the Iranians descended from the same stock and exhibited great affinity and resemblances.<sup>9</sup> They came down from their common home into India and Iran as well as they dwelt as one undivided race. However, according to Dr. Radhakrishnan<sup>10</sup>. Indians and Iranians belonged to the larger family of the Indo-Europeans with their sub-divisions. While animism, magic, ancestor-worship, belief in immortality were said to be the main elements of the Indo-European stock. The history of Indian thought began only when the Aryans of Central Asia separated themselves into two groups—the one making through Afghanistan to India and the other

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spreading over the territory called the Iran.<sup>11</sup> But, who were the wandering Aryans cannot be decidedly ascertained from the available data. I can only be surmised that the Sanskrit was the spoken language of the Aryans and the Aryan race was split up into many branches. Some claimed that the Dravidians seem to have come to India at a much earlier date than the Aryans and had their civilisation well established in India before the coming of the Aryans.<sup>12</sup> In this respect, it is true that the Dravidians and Aryans influenced each other in all forms of life. Dr. Radhakrishnan again opines that the numerous tribes, who still inhabit mountaineous regions and who are difficult to access are perhaps, the original inhabitants of India<sup>13</sup>.

However, in the given situation the idea of a new mode of life had become a far discovering source of eternal peace, i.e., the life of renunciation as opposed to the life of plenty led by a householder. Subsequently, the system of 'āśramas' or of the four stages of life viz., Brahmacharya, gārhastya, vānaprasta and sanyāsas were evolved and last two states gave opportunities for speculation on the problems of ultimate reality and absolute happiness. Thus, the ascetic life was open not only to the Brāhmaṇas but also to the other cultivated classes of the age. The Vedic literature recorded the names of some non-Brāhmaṇic thinkers belonging to the ascetic cult. The non-vedic literature also contains terms like sramanas as opposed to brāhmaṇas. Again, the literature of the Buddhists and the Jainas frequently had referred to those sects, although it is clear that these sramanas inherited several ideas of Vedic literature inspired by the brāhmaṇas. The tenets of these different wandering sects can be traced back not only to Vedic literature but also to the literature belonging to Upaniṣads.<sup>14</sup>

The quest for the ultimate or final cause goes back to the famous Nāradiya Sukta (incorporated in the Tenth and Concluding book of the R̥gveda). The idea of some higher and happier world is found on the Viṣṇu-sukta (R̥gveda 1,54) and the concept of the transmigration of Souls that is the mortals returning to this world, is as old as the Yamasukta (hymn to the Fathers). The inherent misery of the world and the notion of immortality which was not attainable by worldly possessions have been frequently mentioned in the Upaniṣads.<sup>15</sup> However, there is little information of the non-Vedic ascetic sects in the Brahmanical literature, but in scattered Buddhist Suttas in Pali like the Sāmaññaphala Sutta of the Dīghanikāya and in its Sanskrit counterpart in the Gilgit Manuscripts, in Prakrit Suyagada-the second book of the Svetāmbara Jaina Canon have been traced. These sects naturally glorify the teachings of their own Prophets and condemn those who

were their opponents. However, in the Brāhmanical literature, the names-paribbājakas, Tapasas and Muṇḍakas were usually mentioned who went round and had instance, suggest a code of discipline based on 'tapas' or self-mortification in various ways.

The Muṇḍakas are referred to Upaniṣhadic tenets bearing the same name 'Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad'. The special feature of this sect was that its members shaved their heads.<sup>16</sup> Actually, the shaving of the head instead of wearing long hair seems to have been common to both Vedic and non-Vedic sects.<sup>17</sup> Again, there were some sects which bore the names to correspond with the mode of their dress. Some used white garments, some used to wear coloured (geruya) while some others went naked etc. The members of each particular sect, no doubt, followed the practice of their respective Teachers. However, an analysis of the doctrinal or philosophical texts of the non-Vedic sects showed that the members of such teachers or thinkers and their schools were very large. However, at that time the advent of Buddha and Buddhism is an important landmark in Indian History. It has great significance in the sense that, that was the time when the country was full of literary activities principally religious and philosophical. Needless to say that Buddha was contemporaneous with the Brāhmanical side and with the fellow religious preachers like the Jainas, Ājivikas etc. The entire atmosphere, as it is quite evident, was bristling with philosophical speculations and for Buddha it was indeed an extremely difficult task to propagate a new doctrine by pointing out the inconsistency and unsubstantial arguments of the doctrines already deep-rooted in the society. Of them, the most important one was the theory relating to the Soul. In the Brahmajāla

Sutta and Sāmaññaphala Sutta of the Dīghanikāya, one comes across references to several schools of philosophy which were described as propagating wrong views, they being in certain respects different from those preached by Buddha.

According to Prof. H. Kern, the spiritual aspiration and the views of human life at the rise of Buddhism are extremely gloomy.<sup>17</sup> The striking features according to all sects of Buddhism are how to end miseries of life. All sects accordingly strive to get liberated from worldly existence as well as attaining the highest truth. The Upaniṣads<sup>18</sup> affirm that truth in the highest sense of the word is the essential unity of the highest soul—

'Paramātman with the individual soul 'Pratyagātman' or 'Jīvātman'.<sup>19</sup> Again, according to Sāṅkhyas, the soul is essentially different from matter by which it is clogged though it remains essentially undefiled and eternal.<sup>20</sup> The

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Buddhists denied the existence of soul, rejected notion of 'paramātman' and see the highest Truth in the formula of the four Āryasatyas.<sup>20</sup>

The Greek philosopher Hegel characterises the categories or universals of logic as 'god before the creation of the world or any planet'. Again, it may be mentioned that the Chinese Lao Tsu recognises a cosmos order or the Tao which serves as the foundation for his ethics, philosophy and religion.<sup>21</sup> It is interesting enough that the Upaniṣads had no set of theory of philosophy. The central theme of the Upaniṣads is the problem of the self and this is one of the most important theory discussed in the Upaniṣads. Although, contradictory doctrines of the nature of self are held by Buddha and S'ankara.<sup>22</sup> The four Noble Truths (Āryasatyas) and Noble Eightfold Path (Ariya-aṭṭhaṅgikamagga) lead a man's life to truthfulness which are escape from miserable condition. Four Noble Truths explain the Buddhist attitude to suffering and the way of fulfillment that can be achieved. The Truths say that suffering is always present in the world, the human search for pleasure is the source of suffering that it is possible to be free from the desires by achieving a state called 'nirvāṇa' and that the way to Nirvāṇa is through the Noble Eight-fold Path. The ideal of Buddhism and indigenous Zoroastrian religion of Iran seems to echo almost the same chord. Truth or Satya is the great moral and spiritual idea of native Iranian religion. The earliest phase of the religious history of Iran is dominated by the Zoroastrians, founded by saint Zoroasthura. He taught that life was like a battle between two forces - good and evil. According to Zoroastrian philosophy, the concept of Dualism is a belief in two polarities constantly in opposition and strife with each other both in the universe and in the life of a man viz., the light and darkness, virtue and vice, truth and lie besides good and evil. The most popular sacred slogan of Zoroastrianism in the passage of Āvestā<sup>23</sup> is as follows— 'Truth is the highest good or the richest wealth' (Skt. *ṛtam vasu vasistham asti*). Truth is the great moral and spiritual ideal of Iranianism just as in India we have Dharma or cosmic order of righteousness as its great deal. Actually, the Indo-Aryan pantheon and many ancient practices found their way into the Zoroastrian faith.<sup>24</sup>

In conclusion regarding the philosophical background of Veda, Upanisadi and Buddhism it may be said that the seed of those religions are imbedded in the theory of Aryan migration who came from Central Asia.<sup>25</sup> It would not be irrelevant to mention that Swami Vivekānanda himself preferred to focus upon the civilisational values of admixture of different ancient religions i.e., the confluence between various civilisations and the 'universal brotherhood among men'.<sup>26</sup>

### End Note :

1. Buddhism (Delhi, 2007) p.3
2. Ibid
3. Ibid
4. S'atapatha Brahmana IV.2.5.10
5. Indian Philosophy by Dr. Radhakrishnan ( London, 1922) Vol I p.72
6. Ibid
7. Ibid op.cit. p.74
8. Ibid
9. Ibid
10. Ibid p.74 f.n.3
11. Ibid p.75 f.n.1
12. Ibid
13. Ibid
14. 2500 years of Buddhism ed. P.V. Vapat (Publication Divisions, Delhi, 1956) p. 11
15. Ibid
16. Mendaka pi idhakacce Brāhmaṇa bhavati-Suttanipāta
17. Ibid
18. Manual of Buddhism by Prof. H.Kern Indelological Studies, Varanasi and Delhi p. 11
19. Regarding the date of Upanisad, it is likely that they were composed between the completion of the Vedic hymns and the rise of Buddhism
20. H.Kern pp. 11-12
21. ABartha-Religions of India pp.64-86; vide- Kern p. 11
22. Kern p. 12
23. Sacred book of the Zoroastrians
24. Iranianism by Suniti Kumar Chatterjee (The Asiatic Society, Kolkata, 1993 repristed) p. 12
25. Complete works of Swami Vivekananda vol.IV p.400 Swamiji comments- 'the Aryan in their oldest records were in the land between Turkistan and the Punjab and North-West Tibet.'
26. Vide-Bulletin of the RamKrishna Mission Institute of Culture, June, 2016 article on 'Swami Vivekananda's thoughts on Language : A brief survey by Prof. Sabyasachi Bhattacharya.

# Influence of Buddhism on Tamil Studies

Subhra Barua

Emperor Asoka was the greatest royal patron of Buddhism. Indeed it was through his efforts that Buddhism came to occupy a prominent position in India and abroad. Asoka's Rock Edicts II and XIII encomerate the proviencies in his own territory as well as abroad where he sent Buddhist missionaries. These two Rock Edicts are of particualr value on account of the information they contain about his missions to the Tamil Country. The spread of Buddhism in Tamil soil in the early stages can be seen mainly from the epigraphical evidences found in its caves and stone pillars. A number of caves and pillar inscription written in Brahmi scripts, which wer popularized by Asoka through his Dhammavijaya, have been found in Tamilnadu, mainly in Madurai, Tirucci, Tinuveli and Cenkalpattu districts.

The priod from 3rd century B.C. to 2nd century A.D. is called the 'Caṅkam' (saṅgam) age, because it is believed that the 'Caṅkam' poems were written during this period. The name 'Caṅkam' is used in Tamil tradition to refer to an assembly of schalars or an academy. In this context it is used as an alternative name of the Tamil word 'Kutal' which means 'meeting'. The Tamil Academy, which is called by the popular name 'Caṅkam' also flourished during this period. Some Caṅkam poems contain evedeences which are helpful to reconstruct the early history of Buddhism in the Tamil country. Some scholars are of opinion that Buddhism was not a peredominant religion in the Caṅkam period, so Caṅkam literature provides with only scanty details on Buddhism. A great social change took place in the Tamil country after the 3rd century A.D. The newly emerged merchant class patronized Buddhism as well as Jainism at that period. Buddhism in the Tamil country seems to have made rapid strides with the patronage of the Kalappirar, who are supposed to have come from Karnataka and the business community after the fourth century A.D. Around the fifth century A.D. two great Pali commentators of Tamil country-Buddhadatta and Dhammapāla actively engaged in religious activities both in the Tamil country and ceylon. They wrote many Pali books and commentaries on Pali canonical literature which throw much light on many important Buddhist places and movements in the Tamil

country. There is no controversy regarding the birth place of Buddhaghosa, the most famous commentator of Pali literature. The lives of these Therāvāda Buddhist monks show that these monks lived in an age in which merchants and the kings extended their patronage Buddhism and constructed Buddhist manasteries and Buddhism spread throughout the Tamil country at the period. Some great scholars of Mahayana Buddhism were also the inhabitants of the Tamil country.

There are some Caṅkam poet whose names are derived from Buddhism and its milieu. For example, the names cāttan and cāttanār, found in Akanānuru, Puranānuru, Nariṇai and Kuruntokai may be recognised as Tamilised forms of the word 'Sāsta' (Teacher), which is an attribute of the Buddha. There is a poet called Ḵampōtiyār which literally means the man of the young Bodhi, the sacred tree of Buddhism. The important word 'Caṅkam' may owe its origin to the Buddhist term 'Saṃgha', it means 'The order of Monks'. Another Caṅkam poem, Netunalvatai, traditionally attributed to Nakkirar, speaks about 'piṭakaṃ'. Buddhist technical term 'Piṭaka' bears the meaning box or basket and in this poem, the poet is also using the term in the same sense.

Some poetical compositions bear the influence of Buddhism are :

**Maturaikkanci :** It is composed by mankuti Marutan, a Caṅkam poet. The poem describes a day's activities of the city of Maturai. While portraying the evening scenes, the poet speaks of women accompanied by their children and husbands visiting a Buddhist viḥāra with flowers and incense to offer evening worship to Buddha. There is thus literary evidence for a Buddhist Vihara in Madurai worshipped by followers of Buddha.

**Manimekhalai :** It is an epic poem of 30 chapters, presenting the life story of Manimekhalai, the daughter of Kovalan through Madhavi. Sithalai Sattanar, a devotee of Buddha, has written this epic, probably in the latter half of the 2nd century A.D. He was not only an eminent poet and erudite literary critic, but also a worthy exponent of the Buddhist doctrine. Sattanar stated that his chief aim of composing Manimekhalai was the propagation of Buddhism.

Manimekhalai's mother madhavi was a dancer. Manimekhalai grew up amidst vast wealth and became gradually expert in music and dance. Prince Udaya, son of the king of Cola, fell in love, attracted by her beauty and talent. The prince conspired against her father and had him charged on a false accusation when he went to Madhura. Later Kovalan was executed on this charge. As his wife knew of this heinous crime, she become very much



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frustrated with the worldly life. So she approached Aravana Adigal, the famous Buddhist teacher, with her daughter Manimekhalai. Being much moved by the preaching of this teacher both the mother and the daughter embraced Buddhism. But prince udaya tried to persuade Manimekhalai to revert to the previous life but he was not successful. The king of Cola became much pleased with her pious deeds and gave her permission to ask for a boon. She desired that the royal prison should be converted to an alms hall. This wish of Manimekhalai was accordingly fulfilled. She continued her studies in Buddhism and led a holy life of a Buddhist nun till the end of her days peering the doctrine of Buddha.

In Manimekhalai there are certain portions that are nothing but the praise of Buddha. This work is largely concerned with previous births, propagation of dhamma and Buddhist philosophy. A special feature of Manimekhalai is its exposition of Buddhist logic in its chapter 29. This great epic with its glowing account of Buddhism in the Tamil environment brought to the public a renewed awareness of this religion.

**Tirukkural :** It is most popular, most widely esteemed Tamil classic. Its appeal is universal. About the author Tiruvalluvar, we have little empirically valid information. Nearly 115 chapter in Tirukkural deal with the various facets of life in this world. The remaining chapters talk of asceticism. Some verses of Tirukkural have close affinity with the verses of the Dhammapada.

**Kuntalakeci :** She was a woman ascetic contemporaneous with Buddha whose story is found in the Pali book Therigāthā of the Khuddakanikāya. Here the their is called Kundalakesi.

She was a princess of Rajagaha who loved and married a youth. But later the youth tried to hurl her down a mountain treacherously. She turned the tables by a ruse and pushed him down the mountain to his death. Thereafter she became a Jain nun with shaven head in which however round curls of hair grew as indicated by her name (Kuntala-curved; keci-haired lady). When she went about preaching Jainism challenging men of other religions to disputations, she met Sāriputta, one of the chief disciples of Buddha. Sāriputta defeated her in argument and took her to Buddha himself, resulting in her becoming a Buddhist nun and again engaging in a career in a career of religious debate showing the supremacy of Buddhism.

It is a lost Tamil poetical work probably by the author nagagutlanar. In the commentary to Nilakesi it is found that h was quoted from Kundalakesi with the following remark “This is a verse from Nagaguttanar. But a Pali commentary entitled ‘Vimativinodani’, the author of Kundalakesi is called

Nāgasena. It might be quite possible that the name Nāgasena was converted into Nagaguttanar by the Tamil writers. Other particulars about this Buddhist scholar are still lacking.”

A few citation of this poetical work survive as part of commentaries on Tolkappiyam, Yapparunkalam and Viracoliyam.

Viracoliyam : It is a Tamil grammar written by the Buddhist author Puttamittirar at the request of an imperial Cola. Puttamittirar has named this work after Viracolan (also called Virarajendra Cola), one of the kings of the cola dynasty. It embodies a point of particular relevance to Tamil Buddhism as it begins with the salutation to Avalokiteśvāra, Bodhisattva of the Mahāyāna Buddhism.

Peruntevanar, a student of the author of Viracoliyam, who was also a Buddhist, has written a commentary on this work which is valuable for its historical allusions, citations of works. There are a few strong Buddhist devotional poems found in the commentary of Viracoliyam.

Other works now lost :

From allusions in Nanappirakacar’s commentary on Civañāna cittiyar, names of two works are found—

1. Cittantattokai—presumed to be an exposition of Buddhist tenets. One verse from this work, in praise of Buddha’s path as the only way to release from the bondage of the cycle of rebirth, is quoted in the commentary mentioned above.

2. Tiruppatikam—A poem inferred to be of devotional praise of Buddha from one verse quoted from it.

Vimpacara Katai—A third last Buddhist work is known from the commentary on Nilakeci verse 190 citing four lines of verse, confirmed by an identical reference in the commentary on Civañāna cittiyar. there is no information as to the nature of this poetical work or its author, it may be presumed that it relates a part of story of Vimpacaram viz. Bimbisāra, a king ruling at the time of Buddha and greatly devoted to him as his disciple.

Buddhist intellectuals used Tamil language for propagating their faith in the Tamil land for several centuries. But with the decline of the religion, its works have also been lost for the most part owing presumably to the general neglect.

The scholars of Tamil country contributed a great deal to the growth of Buddhism in neighbouring countries where they settled. It proves that the Tamil Buddhist genius was not destroyed but enriched Buddhism in new areas where it developed with fresh vigour and vivacity.

# **Fourfold Immeasurable: The Means for Generating a Good Heart**

**Sanjib Kumar Das**

The present era is the era of violence, disharmony, lies, stealth, greed, hates, slander and so on. Competition of making deadly weapon has reached the extreme limit. It may be the cause of destruction of the entire creation. Men desire victory with the help of such deadly weapons and dishonest means which is not possible. The whole world, thus, is vibrating with the single voice and cry for 'Peace! Peace! Peace!' Almost every society in the world is after the effort of prevailing peace in their society. Although the interpretation on peace also varies among people living in that society, yet everyone's ultimate goal seems to be same. It shows nobody, particularly human beings living in the world, is safe in true sense. Directly or indirectly they have to live in fear, panic and insecurity due to the wave of violence and disharmony. Despite of being equipped with every materialistic need every being simply wants to live in peace and harmony.

Although the human being lives in such a world where flourish many religions, customs and traditions. Every religion, custom and tradition has its own importance and significance. No religion or custom may be underestimated without knowing its depth and actuality. I think there is no place for violence and disharmony in any one of them. None of them ever teaches to gain happiness by making other unhappy. The most important thing among them is how it is interpreted, how it is practiced. It is because misinterpretation always proves dangerous to oneself and others.

So far the topic 'Fourfold Immeasurable: The Means for Generating a Good Heart' is concerned, it is obvious that every being in this saṃsara, equally wishes for happiness and wants no suffering which is so not only for us intelligent and sensible human beings, but also for the ignorant and closed-minded, even down to the tiniest worms and insects. All equally desire happiness and wish not to experience even the slightest suffering. Therefore, both I and others must engage in the means which give rise to happiness and do not bring about suffering.

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Now the question arises as which type of happiness we want to gain. Is it a life of physical happiness consisting the perfection of materialistic progress, such as having good bank balance, Mercedes cars and big house duly equipped with complete requirements or a life of mental happiness being free from stress, tension, dissatisfactory, greed and restlessness? If we generally see the external world or human society in particular, it seems that mostly human beings are inclined to physical happiness, rather than mental happiness referring to the actual happiness. There is less number of people who are inclined to gain this happiness. Why does it happen? I think men are unable to recognize what the actual happiness is. It is because the thinking power and identifying capacity of ordinary human beings are so strange and conservative that we often apprehend what is impure as pure, what is selfless as having a self, what is suffering as happiness and what is impermanent as permanent. It means we often grasp and understand the false as true, and it is liable to continue until the pure understanding arises in us. Why these things happen? It is because we are the prey to four misapprehensions, four wrong thoughts. Due to our poor understanding we are hardly able to understand that the physical happiness is momentary, perishable and object to be irritated when enjoyed more and more. For example, some people who wish to become rich through hoarding and guarding wealth, make effort initially both mentally and physically, but experience the frustration of being unable to gather as much as they wish. In the process they experience the frustration of being robbed, losing their wealth or wasting it and being unable to protect it. Finally, whatever they do they must experience the suffering of being forever separated from their wealth, which passes into the possession of others. All these sufferings related to wealth and possessions are faults arising from not understanding the real meaning of the Dharma. It means we apprehend suffering as happiness. If we understand the dharma and see all riches as essenceless like a dewdrop on a blade of grass, we will not experience the frustrations stemming from countless attempts to hoard and guard our wealth and from being unwillingly separated from it.

Similarly when others insult, rebuke and speak unpleasant words to us, an intolerable pain arises like a thorn at the heart. Why these things happen? It is because we have a strong grasping at a designated self which actually does not exist at all. Because of this grasping we think ourselves superior to our opponent which produces a type of arrogance and boastfulness in us for no reason. If we comprehend the teachings we can recognize their essenceless nature which resembles an echo. So, just as when an inanimate object is scolded, we will experience not the slightest mental turmoil and so on.

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Now the question arises as how the actual happiness can be gained. Does it fall down from the sky; is it transferred by some Almighty or the one who possesses supernatural power; does it come up from the earth? According to Buddhism, happiness or misery whatever it may, everything comes under the Law of Karma. And happiness can only be gained through generating a good heart by giving up evil thoughts through practising the fourfold immeasurable as explained in the Buddhist scriptures. The application of the Fourfold Immeasurable in regard to achieving peace and harmony in the world is now a recognized fact. This fourfold Sublime Idea can create a peaceful, harmonious and congenial atmosphere amongst persons and nations in the world.

The chosen topic of this paper, according to Buddhism, can be described in the following ways: identification, meaning, definitive number, why is it called immeasurable, objective, basis in which the immeasurable develops, antidotes of which object to be abandoned, order of meditating the Fourfold Immeasurable, classification, how is it meditated?, benefit of practising the immeasurable and how to generate a good heart.

**Identification of the fourfold immeasurable :** The fourfold immeasurable, also known as Catur Brahmavihāra in Sanskrit and The Four Divine States in English, are: loving-kindness, compassion, joyfulness and equanimity. Ācārya Aniruddha says in Abhidhammatthasangaho: Mettā Karuṇā Muditā Upekkhā Ceti Imā Catasso Appamaññāyo nāma, Brahma-vihāra ti pi vucchanti. [9.9]

**Meaning :** Among the four, loving-kindness is the desire that all sentient beings should come to acquire happiness; compassion is the desire that they should come to be freed from suffering; joyfulness is the gladness at the happiness they have acquired, and equanimity an even-mindedness consisting of absence of either desire or hatred, also directed towards all beings. It may be illustrated in another way, i.e., the wish for sentient beings to be endowed with happiness and the cause of happiness is called loving-kindness; the wish for sentient beings to be free from suffering and the cause of suffering is compassion; the wish for sentient beings not to be separate from the happiness devoid of suffering; and the wish for sentient beings to remain in neutral state devoid of harbouring attachment towards the nearest and hatred towards the far. Thus, these four attitudes are called immeasurable because it is the concentration duly associated with wisdom which causes to visualize the immeasurable sentient beings which is its object of observation relying on the fundamental condition referring to the actual concentrations (Skt. Maulara-prathama-dhyāna; Wyl. bsam gtan gyi dngos gzhi) so that the wish of associating

with happiness, dissociating from suffering, wishing not to be devoid of happiness and wishing to be free from the delusion of attachment and hatred may develop in him. These fourfold wish should belong to the mind of the one who dwells in the dhyana and so these four states are cultivated through meditation. These states are also inter-related and they support each other. These four immeasurables can be explained through the following examples :

**i. Immeasurable of loving-kindness (Skt. Apramāa Maitrī; Pāli. Mettā) :** Suppose a mother has three sons. Among them, the first one remains unhealthy due to his sickness; the second one is on a high post; and the third one is still a baby. Here, mother implies the mother who is affectionate and selfless. So, she thinks of her three sons equally, without making any distinction of any sort. In the same way, thinking of all sentient beings as equal and treating them equally is called Immeasurable. In the scriptures, the attitude of Love is compared with the sky, i.e., the sky pervades equally everyone and everything without thinking of what is pure or impure etc. Even so, one who practises the Immeasurable Love sees and treats all equally without making any distinction between high and low, rich and poor, yours and mine and so forth.

**ii. Immeasurable Compassion (Skt. Apramāṇa Karuṇā; Pāli. Karuṇā) :** It is like the attitude of the above-mentioned mother who looks after her sick son more carefully. She always worried about him, thinking what he will do after death, how he will survive etc. In the same way, the practitioner who practices the Immeasurable Compassion sees all sentient beings equally. Similarly, he thinks about is worried about particularly those who are immersed in suffering, in order to free them from it. With such an attitude, he serves them as much as possible. Neither does he flatter anybody nor does he do anything prompted by selfishness; but the goal to serve the needy persons becomes his nature and indispensable purpose of life.

**iii. Immeasurable of Joy (Skt. Apramāṇa Muditā; Pāli. Muditā) :** It is like the above-mentioned mother who is not jealous of the son who is on a high ranking officer, prosperous or honoured. Instead, she thinks and prays, “May my son rise to higher to higher posts; may his wealth, property and fame increase continuously! In the same way, the practitioner is not jealousy with anyone's fame, reputation, prosperity, knowledge, post etc. Instead, he feels joy about it. He thinks, “This person is blessed! He did virtuous deeds in his past life and so he has reached such a state today. May his fame increase! It means he is pleased to see a virtuous person prospering etc., that is called joy. The practice of Immeasurable Joy is more difficult than Immeasurable Compassion. It is because it is easy to sympathize or express sympathy, to

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serve someone etc., seeing him in a miserable condition, but it is very difficult to join someone's merriment, pleasure and prosperity without making any pomp, and also co-operate with him.

**iv. Immeasurable Equanimity (Skt. Apramāṇa Upekā; Pāli. Upekkhā) :** Suppose, on a holy occasion, a mother cleans the rooms of her house, purifies the temple with incense, lamp, scented materials etc. After that she sits before her object of worship (idol) in order to observe her religious vow, devotion etc. At that time, her baby comes in her laps and urinates or defecates there. In such a situation, will she be angry with the baby? No, never! Instead, she will smile with the state of infancy of her baby and take him out. In the same way, if an individual person or ordinary people wants to harm us, creates obstacle in our business or path, at that time, a sadhaka should forgive him by practising the Immeasurable of Equanimity. At that time, he should think that it is not his fault, rather, it is the result of the bad impressions in him. He should also abide in a neutral state. He should maintain the neutral state in the very conditions that brings forth happiness and misery. Neither should he hate one who causes suffering nor feel attachment for another who causes happiness. Instead, he should overlook these and remain unperturbed, in an equanimous state. Hence, remembering the high ideology of a mother, we should practise the four immeasurable in gradual steps.

**Cause :** These four attitudes develop from four conditions. The naturally abiding family (Skt. Prakritistha Gotra) that abides naturally in the sentient beings is called the causal condition (Skt. Hetu-pratyaya); the spiritual friend who teaches about it is the fundamental condition (Skt. Āhipati-pratyaya); one's own place is the objective condition (Skt. Alambana-pratyaya); and the benefits of meditating and faults of not meditating in that way are its immediately preceding condition (Skt. Samanantara-pratyaya).

**Definitive number :** These four attitudes have been spoken as antidotes of four negative attitudes— harmful intention towards other; violence; not being happy with other's wealth; and attachment of desire.

**Literal Meaning :** These four attitudes are called immeasurable, both because their object is an immeasurable number of sentient beings and because the person who meditates upon them acquires immeasurable quantity of merits and dharmas, thereby, becomes an object of experience of immeasurable wisdom. One is thus advised to meditate, in a right manner, upon the Fourfold Immeasurable.

**Objective :** The sentient beings of the Desire Realm are known as its objective as it act as antidote to the harmful intention visualizing the beings of the Desire Realm (Skt. Kamadhatu).

**Basis in which the immeasurable develops :** The attitude of the fourfold

immeasurable newly develops in human beings as they possess clear mind and have more delusions.

**Antidotes of which object to be abandoned :** The fourfold immeasurable acts as antidote to four basic afflictions: harmful intention, violation, non-joy and attachment. It means by practising the fourfold immeasurable one becomes free from the above-mentioned four negative attitudes.

**Order of meditating the four immeasurables :** On the basis of the capacity of individual or ordinary persons, the equanimity is principally practised first as without developing the attitude of equanimity towards all sentient beings, pure loving-kindness and compassion do not arise. Acarya Tsongkhapa says: On the ground of the equanimity decant the water of love and plant the seed of compassion. From these the harvest of Bodhicitta will arise.<sup>1</sup> However, one may meditate any one of the four as the antidote of the discordant factor which may arise strongly first. For example, if the discordant factor 'attachment' of loving-kindness arises strongly in oneself, he may meditate the immeasurable of loving-kindness first.

**Classification :** Each of the fourfold immeasurable is classified into three: that for merely observing sentient beings, that for merely observing the dharma and that for merely observing the lack of true existence. Among the three, the fourfold immeasurable possessed by an individual (pratyaka-pudgala) and non-Buddhists is the immeasurable merely observing sentient beings as it develops through observing the existence of self and sentient beings; the fourfold immeasurable possessed by the Śrāvakas and Self-Buddhas is the immeasurable for merely observing the dharma as it develops through observing the non-existence of the self and sentient beings only, because they assert that the five aggregates are with nature of impermanence, suffering and so on whereas the self and the sentient beings do not exist; and the fourfold immeasurable possessed by those who abide on the ground of Bodhisattva as well as by the Tathagata is the immeasurable merely observing the lack of true existence through realizing the self and dharma being lacking their true existence. In this way, they bring forth inconceivable benefits to the sentient beings.

**How is it meditated ? :** For the beginner, it is obvious that without developing the attitude of equanimity towards all sentient beings, it is quite difficult to develop the other threefold immeasurable. Therefore, the practice of the immeasurable of equanimity is prescribed first. However, one needs to be attentive with the discordant factors that arises strongly and when arises, he should meditate upon the antidote prescribed first for it.

This meditation can, further, be of three types— depending upon the



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manner in which one directs the mind's attention. It can have sentient beings as its object, have dharmas as its object, or be without an object.

In the first of these beings are apprehended as being substantially real and existing independently of the aggregates. Accordingly, one develops the desire that they be free from suffering and the rest.

With the realization of the 'selflessness of person', beings— in the second case— are viewed as entities merely ascribed to the dharmas which comprise the heaps. One then develops the desire that they be free from suffering. In the third case, beings are viewed as illusory in nature through the realization of the 'selflessness of phenomena', and one develops the desire that they be free from suffering and so on. The first meditation is the one practised by 'common persons'. According to one school of Buddhist thought, the second type is practised by the Śrāvaka and Self-Buddha whereas another school holds that the Śrāvakas and Self-Buddhas also attain realization of the selflessness of phenomena and that both the latter two types of meditation are therefore practised by all the Āryas of the Three Vehicles.

Concerning the actual method of practice, in developing the first three attitudes one distinguishes three types of persons: a friend, a neutral person and an enemy. First one directs the attention towards such individuals as one's mother or father etc., and meditates upon the desire that they meet with happiness etc.

Then, the attention is directed toward individuals of the 'neutral' category and, finally, towards an enemy. When the desires that one's friends meet with happiness and that one's enemies meet with happiness are of equal intensity, the meditation is completed. In the case of equanimity, one first meditates upon the category of neutral persons. One subsequently meditates upon an attitude of equanimity towards all: both those dear to one and those whom one feels animosity.

In answer to the question of what the results of this practice are, the outcome of meditation upon loving-kindness, etc., sustained by the wisdom apprehending the two types of selflessness nature is the attainment of nirvāṇa. Yet even if one does not acquire this highest goal, one will acquire a happiness which lies beyond the sensory realm— that is, the happiness of the Brahma realm set in the first dhyāna, free from the torment of anger. Hence, the text here indicates that loving-kindness and so forth are preparatory exercises leading to the attainment of the dhyāna states.

**Benefit of practising the fourfold immeasurable :** Practising of the fourfold immeasurable gathers huge quantity of benefits, such as one abides with the supreme happiness in this life, accrues immeasurable quantity of merits,

his attitude becomes stable for the complete enlightenment, he is born in the saṃsāra for the sake of sentient beings and so on. Further, the cultivation of the Immeasurables is said to have the power to cause the sadhaka to be reborn as a universal emperor or as the god Brahmā. One, who, assiduously develops these four sublime states, by conduct and meditation, is said to become an equal of Brahmā. If he becomes dominant influence in his mind, he will be reborn in congenial worlds, the realm of Brahmā. Therefore, these states of mind are called Brahma-lika. So, the sādḥaka is instructed to radiate out to all beings in all directions the mental states of loving-kindness, compassion, joy and equanimity. These four pure attitudes should fill all directions, leaving no part of the world untouched by them. Aṅguttara Nikāya states: "How does, o monks, a monk attain the state of Brahmā? O monks, here a monk with the mind endowed with loving-kindness, with compassion, with joy and with equanimity fill the first direction, the second, the third and the fourth, thus upwards, the mind endowed with equanimity that is abundant, great immeasurable, devoid of hatred, animosity and attains the State of Brahmā. [A.N.Chattukanipata, PTS, II, p. 184]". Nāgārjuna also says in Sūtrlekha:

Practise constant meditation upon loving-kindness,  
Compassion, joyfulness, equanimity.  
Even though you may not attain the highest goal,  
You will acquire the bliss of the Brahma Realm. [40]

However, the result may be categorized into the four results. 1. Fruitional result (Skt. Vipāka-Phala) is divided into two: temporal and ultimate. Temporally one obtains the body of higher rebirth. Ultimately, the attainment of definite goodness is gained. 2. Causally concordant result (Skt. Niṣyanda-Phala)- One is spontaneously engaged in the practice of the fourfold immeasurable wherever he is born. 3. Dominant result (Skt. Adhipati-Phala)- He is born with attractive looking. 4. Personally made result (Skt. Puruṣakara-Phala)- The result whatever it may be becomes effective.

**How to generate a good heart :** One may think about whether a good heart can be generated by means of practising the fourfold immeasurable. To find out the answer of this question, he needs to be familiarized how a good heart is interpreted. According to Buddhism, one whose heart is perfected with the three qualities as described by Gautama the Buddha in Dhammapada, 'Not to commit any non-virtue, to accumulate merits and to tame the mind wholly' may be called a good heart. If it is so, having contemplated upon the meaning of the fourfold immeasurable, if one takes them into practice, will not his heart be perfected with the aforesaid three qualities being free from all

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sorts of negative emotions? Similarly, it is also emphasized that in order to attain the state of Buddhahood, one needs to be perfected with the union of method (upāya) and wisdom (prajā or paññā), the practice of the fourfold immeasurable is known as the part of method while the wisdom of realizing the selflessness is known as the part of wisdom. Thus, when these two jointly perfect one's heart or mind, he becomes free from the dual obstruction causing him to accumulate the dual merit. As a result, he becomes a Perfect and Complete Buddha, the state of non-abiding nirvāṇa.

### **Notes and References :**

1. Ladakh-Prabha, Central Institute of Buddhist Studies, Choglamsar, Leh, 2006, p. 349.

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# Concept of Buddhist Individual Ethics with reference to the selected Texts of the Pāli Nikāya

Aiswarya Biswas

The discourses collected in the *Sutta Piṭaka*<sup>1</sup> the second part of the Tipiṭaka<sup>2</sup> is also popularly known as 'Dhamma' and 'Sutta' whereas the rules and regulations for the management of the Buddhist community is called *Vinaya* and the transcendental doctrine is called *Abhi-dhamma*. No separate discourse for Buddhist ethics exists in the ancient Pāli Canon. Rather a sophisticated and profound ethical theory is found throughout the Canon.

Thus the *Dhamma* as natural law and the *Vinaya* as human law are complementary parts of the Buddhist ethical system. In the *Dhamma* the individual has responsibility for his or her own development, whereas through the *Vinaya* the community or society offers sanctions and rules to regulate the actions of individuals. The *Dhamma* deals with ideals and principles whereas the *Vinaya* deals with the rules and circumstances in which these ideals and principles are practiced and realized. Thus the *Dhamma* (doctrine) and the *Vinaya* (discipline) make the whole of Buddhist ethics. Practically without taking into consideration of these two components of the *Pali*, no adequate idea of Buddhist ethics can be reached. But I have, very consciously, taken up the *Dhamma* i.e. the Discourses of the second part of the *Tipiṭaka* viz. the *Sutta Piṭaka* for my paper with a specific motto of presenting only the ideals and principles of Buddhist ethics, not its application. Definition of ethics:

The field of ethics (or moral philosophy) involves systemizing, defending and recommending concepts of right and wrong behavior. Philosophers today usually divide ethical theories into three general subject areas: Meta-ethics, Normative-ethics, and Applied-ethics.

Meta-ethics investigates where our ethical principles come from, and what they mean. Are they social inventions? Do they involve more than expressions of our individual emotions? Meta-ethics answers to these questions, focuses on the issues of universal truths, the will of God, the role of reason in ethical judgments, and the meaning of ethical terms themselves.

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Normative-ethics takes on more practical task, which is to arrive at moral standards that regulate right and wrong conduct. This may involve articulating the good habits that we should acquire, the duties that we should follow, or the consequences of our behavior on others.

Finally, Applied-ethics involves examining specific controversial issues, such as abortion, infanticide, animal rights, environmental concerns, homosexuality, capital punishment, or nuclear war and so on.<sup>3</sup>

By using the conceptual tools of Meta-ethics and Normative-ethics, discussions in Applied-ethics try to resolve these controversial issues.

### Buddhist concept of individual being or human-identity:

A common objection to early Buddhist ethics is how there can be free will and responsibility without a permanent self that transmigrates through lives. If there is no self, who is the agent of actions? Who experiences the consequences of actions? Is the person who performs an action in this life the same person that experiences the consequences of that action in a future life or a different person?

The Buddha considers these questions improper for his disciples, who are trained to explain things in terms of causes and conditions.<sup>4</sup> The moral agent is not a substance-self rather the five aggregates, a dynamic and dependently-arisen process-self who, like a flame or the water of a river, changes all the time and yet has some degree of continuity.

According to the Buddhists, the so called person or 'Pudgala'<sup>5</sup> is in fact, just a bundle of five psycho-physical factors - '*Pañcupādānakkhandhā*' or '*Nāmarūpa*'. In the "*Culla-Saccaka Sutta*" of the *Majjhima Nikaya* (Sutta no. 35), we get an elaborate discussion on it. The '*Pañcupādānakkhandhā*' is the combination of '*Nāma*' and '*Rūpa*'. '*Nāma*' is composed of *Vedanā* (feeling) *Saññā* (perception) *Sankhārā* (disposition) *Viññanā* (consciousness). *Rūpa* is physical body. These five aggregates must be harmoniously combined and unified and must be capable of functioning together as a unit, whereby the whole of the individual can be comprehended. It is to be noted here that the second sermon<sup>6</sup> of the Buddha upholds the theory of "*Anatta*" by thorough analysis of '*Khandhās*' or five psycho-physical factors. All these phenomena are of impermanent nature and have no nature of their own that is why they cannot constitute a permanent entity (or soul) within the flux of world.

Buddha's emphasis on dependence of phenomena and his rejection of any mysterious substance or entity that functions within phenomena as an

inner controller compelled him to focus more on the conception of *Saṅkhara* (dispositions) which literary means “putting together” (Sam + √kr). For the Buddha *Saṅkhāras* like any other psychological events are dependently arisen (*Paṭiccasamuppannā*) and being integral parts of the *Pudgala* that *Saṅkhāras* process themselves as well as other constituents. As pointed out the most important function of individuating a person belongs to the *Saṅkhāras*. It can function in the most extreme way— for example, in creating an excessively egoistic tendency culminating in the belief in a permanent and eternal self (*Sassata atta*).<sup>7</sup> For this reason the Buddha considered the ‘Self as no more than a “*Saṅkhārās-puāja*” or “lump of dispositions”.<sup>8</sup> Thus ignorance can determine the way human dispositions function - “*Avijjā paccaya satkhara*”,<sup>9</sup> either in creating the belief in permanent existence or in denying the value of the human personality and its activities.

*Saikhara* are of various types, the most popular among them relating to *Kayasakhara*, *Vaclsankhara* and *Manosankhara*. As such they are associated with the three types of action (*Kammd*) - *Kayakamma* (bodily) *Vaclkamma* (verbal) and *Mano-kamma* (mental). The *Bhumajja-Sutta*<sup>10</sup> states that bodily, verbal and mental actions generate (*abhisafikharoti*) bodily, verbal and mental dispositions (*Cetana* or *Safakhara*). This again underscores the fact that the *Cetana* or *Safakhara* are not autonomous.<sup>11</sup>

Following Buddha’s popular statement: “*Cetanāhaṃ bhikkhave kammaṃ vadāmi cetayitvā kammaṃ karoti kāyena vācāya manasā*”<sup>12</sup> we have a psychological explanation<sup>12</sup>: coordinating thought or volition (*Saācetanā* or *Cetanā*) is the spring of action and action generates *Saṅkhārā*. According to this notion volition is the most important factor in determining whether a person is responsible or not responsible for an action? However, there could be a situation where a person might act with no volition immediately evident but could still be held responsible. The dispositions come to play at this point. While volition may be an immediate deciding factor, dispositions represent the gradually built up character involved in decision making.

Today intellectuals are debating on so many complicated issues relating to ethics. Especially psychologists insist on the point that a person could not behave differently being independent of that person’s upbringing, background, or the society. Ofcourse the Buddha recoenized the impact of this psychological attitude of an individual in the shape of *Saṅkhārā* not only on the particular human being but also on the world at large. Our physical surroundings, our amenities of life - housing, clothing, utensils - and in major

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way culture, civilization - even outer space - come to be dominated by human dispositions.

The fundamental moral law of the universe according to early Buddhism is what is popularly called the 'Law of *Kamma*': good actions produce good consequences and bad actions lead to bad consequences.<sup>13</sup> Thus consequences of volitional actions can be experienced in this life or in subsequent lives. Our physical appearance (*Fañña*) character, lifespan (*Āyu*), prosperity (*Dhana*) rebirth & destination (*Punabbhava*) are believed to be influenced by past actions.<sup>14</sup> There is room for mitigating and nay even eradicating the negative consequences of past actions with new volitions in the present.

### Socio-ethical teachings of the Buddha

According to the philosophers psychology was certainly not a seriously cultivated discipline during the pre-Buddhist era.<sup>15</sup> The solution offered by the Brahmanical tradition after it created the dichotomy between fact and value, between *ātma* and *brahmā*, is their fusion into one non-dual (*advaya*) reality.<sup>16</sup> The Buddha was well conversant with the philosophical issues associated with this fusion. Without expending his energies in solving those issues he presented his epistemological discoveries in a way that did not generate such a sharp dichotomy. He emphasized on the sense experience. He utilized only one term "*Dhamma*"<sup>17</sup>, to refer to both fact and value.

The abandoning of absolutist and essentialist conceptions of truth enabled the Buddha to take a fresh look at both facts and values.<sup>18</sup> His assessment of the nature of the factual world then led him to his second major premise about existence, viz. suffering or the "*Dukkha*"<sup>19</sup>. The Buddha made suffering the first noble truth. With the recognition of unsatisfactoriness as a fact of the empirical world, the Buddha's perspective enabled him to admit two more related facts, viz. the causality of suffering and the possibility of its cessation. These then are the second and third noble truths. If '*Dukkha*' is caused, and if there is a possibility of its *Nirodha* (cessation), then comes an obligation to end it. This is the function of fourth noble truth - *Dukkhanirodhagāminīpaṭipadā* or *Ariyaatṭhaṅgikamagga*, the way to end suffering.<sup>20</sup>

First discourse<sup>21</sup> of the Buddha encompasses the entire spiritual path i.e. the bodily, verbal and mental actions. Practically the Middle way doctrine or the Noble Eight Fold Path dealing with wisdom' (*Panna*) and concentration (*Samādhi*) relate to different types of discipline (*Sīla*). The term '*Samma*'

(Skt. *Samyak*) in this context does not mean the opposite of “wrong” but rather ‘perfect’ or “complete”. It denotes the best or most effective way to attain liberation (*Nibbana*). However the Eight fold path is presented in the following way.

*Sammādiṭṭhi*

*Paññā* (wisdom)

*Sammā saṅkappa*

*Sammāvācā*

*Sammākammanta*

*Samma-ājīva*

*Sammā vyāyama*

*Sammā sati*

*Sammā samādhi*

*Sīla* (morality)

*Samādhi* (discipline)

The category of *Paññā* includes especially an enlightened world view, based on insight into the *Aniccā* (impermanent), *Anatta* (non-self nature of being or things), *Patīccasamuppāda* (dependent origination of all phenomena).

The *Paññā* (wisdom) serves as the key-stone.<sup>22</sup> The category of *Samādhi* consists in the development of mental qualities and is responsible for the *Uttīfīyānata* (earnestness), *Satimata* (mindfulness) *Suclikkammakari* (zeal for right action) or steady progress in treading the ethical path.<sup>23</sup> Even the Buddha, who had attained ‘*Sambodhi*’ had to continue to tread the moral path. This is metaphorically expressed in the discourses with the concept of *Māra*, which is the embodiment of the temptations and sensual pleasures. These temptations are not static, dependent on changing conditions and environments. Therefore the Buddha had to be constantly vigilant (*appamatta* or *Satimata*) from at least forty-five years after his attainment of freedom.<sup>24</sup> A glance at the stories of monks and nuns during the Buddha’s day, as recorded in the *Theragāthā* and *Therīgāthā*, clearly indicates the social character of moral path as well as its conclusion, where one person’s achievements inspired another’s undertakings. It is interesting to note that the *Therīs* spoke more of the support and assistance they received from the other *Theras* and *Therīs* who had attained freedom. Those who had attained freedom were the role models for others. This is understandable considering the social background, where the *Theras* were more self-reliant than the *Therīs*—the latter being subjected to centuries of discrimination. The third



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category of *Sīla* (morality) is an expression of social responsibility on the part of the individual. Among other sources, the *Sigālovada-Sutta*, attributed to the Buddha himself, can serve as a typical example of the Buddhist code of individual Lethics. The teachings in this Sutta consist of :

1. The avoidance of the four vices of conduct (corresponding to the first four of the Five Precepts).
2. Doing no evil out of the four prejudices that are caused by love, hatred, delusion, and fear.
3. Not following the six ways of squandering wealth, viz., addiction to intoxicants, roaming **the streets at unseemly hours, frequenting shows, indulgence** in gambling, association with bad companions, and the habit of idleness.
4. Knowledge of how to distinguish among the four false friends, viz., the out-and-out robber, the man who pays lip service, the flatterer, and the leader to destruction, and the four true friends, viz., the helper, the man who is the same in will and woe, the good counselor, and the sympathizer.
5. The amassing of wealth and the fourfold division of money into one part for living and doing duties toward others, two parts for business, and one part for time of need.
6. The covering of the six quarters of human relationships and their attendant mutual responsibilities, viz., child-parent, pupil-teacher, husband-wife, friend-friend, servants and workmen-master or employer, monk-layman.
7. The four bases of social harmony, viz., giving, kind words, life of service, and impartial treatment and participation.

In five ways a *Kulaputta* should minister to monks and priests as the upper quarter : By kind 1. acts, 2. words, 3. thoughts, 4. by keeping open house to them, and 5. by supplying them with their material needs.

In six ways the monks and priests, thus ministered to as the upper quarter, show their love for him. They 1. keep him back from evil, 2. encourage him to do good, 3. feel for him with kindly thoughts, 4. teach him what he has not heard before, 5. correct and clarify what he has learnt, 6. show him the way to heaven.<sup>26</sup> Monks perform this task for the good of lay society not only as an act of returning favors. But out of their own virtue of compassion for the people. Buddhist monks cannot live an absolutely solitary life because they are required by the discipline to maintain good relationships both among themselves and with the lay society.

This emphasis on the *Saṅgha* as a whole and its cooperative parts can be illustrated by the six virtues<sup>27</sup> of fraternal living :

To be amiable in 1. deed, openly and in private; 2. word, openly and in private; 3. thought, openly and in private; 4. to share any lawful gains with virtuous fellows; 5. to keep without blemish the rules of conduct along with one's fellows openly and in private; 6. to be endowed with right views along with one's fellow, openly and in private.

The seven conditions of socio-political welfare are another good illustration as we find in the *Mahāparinibbāna Suttanta of the Dīgha Nikaya* (Sutta No. 16)

1. To hold regular and frequent meetings;
2. To meet together in harmony, disperse in harmony, and do the business and duties of the Order in harmony;
3. To introduce no revolutionary ordinance or break up established ordinance, but train oneself in accordance with the prescribed training rules;
4. To honour and respect those elders of long experience the fathers and leaders of the Order, and deem them worthy of listening to;
5. Not to fall under the influence of craving which arises;
6. To delight in forest retreat; and
7. To establish oneself in mindfulness, with this thought. "Let disciplined co-celibates who have not come, come hither, and let those that have already come live in comfort."<sup>28</sup>

It is to be noted that the importance of friendship with the good (*Kalyāṇamittata*) is stressed in Buddhism both at the level of individual perfection and at the level of the daily life of the commoners. In the Buddha's own words: "Monks, there are these two conditions for the arising of right view (*Sammadiṭṭhi*). What two? These are inducement by others and systematic attention"<sup>29</sup>.

Thus association with good embodied in good people is a prerequisite of the good life not only in individual or social ethics but in entire Buddhist thought and practice.

### **Final deduction :**

Thus we may wind up that the ethics of Buddhism is based on its psychology. The ordinary standards of mundane values require modification.

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Escape from the chain of rebirth into bliss of life eternal is the ideal of this way. Good acts are those which aim at the welfare of others, bad acts are those which aim at self advantage. Karma is thus an act both intellectual and volitional. Meditation on the four noble truths by which one tries to enter the paths of *Arhatship* is a pure act, above good or evil consequences. Thus Buddhist morality is more individual than social. Therefore this virtue-ethical (*Adhisīla*) trends found in the different *Nikāyas* of the *Sutta Piṭaka* should be understood in its own terms inaccessible through the modern interpretation of western ethical tradition.

Finally in our lives we have to imitate the example of the Buddha. Stress is not laid on convention and authority. Indeed His last word was: "...*attadīpa bhava attadīpa viharatha atta-saraṇā anaṇṇa-saraṇā*"<sup>30</sup>.

### Notes and References :

1. Divided into five divisions, viz., the *Dīgha-Nikāya*, the *Majjhima-Nikāya*, the *Samyutta-Nikāya*, the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya*, and the *Khuddaka-Nikāya*. For details vide Bimala Charan Law, *A History of Pali Literature*. New Delhi, 2000 (First Published in 1933), Ch. I, pp. 29-66.
2. Also known as "*Buddhavacana*", "*Pāvacana*", "*Sattanusāsana*", "*Parīyatti*" is composed of 84,000 *dharmakkhandhas* out of which 82,000 are Buddha's own and remaining 2,000 are to be ascribed to his eminent disciples like *Sāriputta*, *Ānanda* and so. Ibid. Ch. II, pp. 67-338.
3. John. H Piet & Ayodhya Prasad [ed.], *Comparative Religious Ethics*. New Delhi, Cosmos Publications, 2000, Ch. 4, pp. 87ff.
4. '*ye dhammā hetuppabhāvā tesam hetum tathāgato āha; tesam ca yo nirodha evam vādi mahāsama*' *utti Mahāvagga*; quoted from A.C Banerjee, *Buddha O Buddha Dharma* (in Bengali), Calcutta (now Kolkata), Firma KLM Pvt. Ltd, 1989, p. 22.
5. It is principally a condemnation of the *Pudgalanairātman-heresy* in Buddhism, a special tenet of the *Vātsīputriya* School. Dr. Sukomal Chaudhury, *Analytical Study of the Abhidharma Kośa*. Calcutta (now Kolkata), Firma KLM Pvt. Ltd., 1983, p. 27-29.
6. Traditionally this *Sutta* was preached by the Buddha five days after his first sermon in the same *Isipatana Migadāya*. *Samyutta Nikaya*, P.T.S. Vol. IV, pp. 22-25; Ibid. Vol. III (*Bhāra Sutta*), p. 25f; *Cūla-Mālunkya* of the *Majjhima (Sutta No. 63)*.
7. *Majjhima Nikaya*, Ibid Vol. I, p. 77.
8. *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, P.T.S., Vol. III, p. 227.
9. Bela Bhattacharya, *Facets of Early Buddhism: A Study of Fundamental Principles*. Calcutta (now Kolkata), 1995, Ch. II, pp. 73-90.

10. *Samyutta*, Ibid. Vol. II, pp. 19-20.
11. In this *Sutta* the term '*Sañcetanā*' is used instead of *Cetanā* which is again analogous to *Saṅkhārā*. Bela Bhattacharya, Ibid. pp. 78ff.
12. *AtthaSālinī*, P.T.S. p. 88.
- 12a. R.P Chowdhury, 'Anatta' Doctrine of Buddhism: A New Approach. IHQ, March, 1995, Vol. XXXI, No 1.
13. *Kammanā Vattati loko kammanā vattati pajā / kamma nibandhanā sattā rathassā* *ñīvā yāyato //*, *Suttanipāta*, verse. 654. Cf. the *Bimānavatthu*, the *Petavatthu* and the *Jātaka* of the *Khuddaka Nikāya* are collections of stories related to this issue.
14. There are five natural laws of *Kamma* in Buddhist moral philosophy, viz., 1) *utu niyāma*, 2) *bhūta niyāma*, 3) *kamma niyāma*, 4) *dhamma niyāma*, 5) *citta niyāma*.
15. S. Radhākrishnan, Indian Philosophy. New Delhi, Oxford University Press: 1999 (First Published in 1923), Vol. I, pp. 151-207.
16. Ibid.
17. David J. Kalupahana [ed.] Ethics in Early Buddhism. New Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass Pub. Pvt. Ltd.: 2008 (First published from University of Hawai'i Press, 1995), Ch. 3, pp. 43-44.
18. Ibid.
19. '*Dukkhe loko patitthito*', *Samyutta Nikāya*, Ibid. Vol. I, p. 40. .... '*yad aniccaṃ taṃ dukkha*', Ibid. p. 42; p. 47ff
20. Bela Bhattacharya, Ibid. pp. 73-90.
21. '*Pathamadhanuñadesana*' or '*Dhammacakka-Pavattana Suttā*', *Samyutta Nikāya*, P.T.S, Vol. II, p. 105ff; *Mahāvagga*(*VinayaPiṭaka*), Ibid. Vol. I, p. 5ff.
22. '*Sabbe saṅkhārā dukkhā 'ti yadā paññāya passatī / atha nibbindatī dukkhe esa maggo visuddhiyā II*, *Dhammapada*, verse. 276.
23. Ibid, verse. 24.
24. *Theragāthā*, verse. 43-44; 69-70; 100, 103, 119, 124, 170, 178 etc.
25. *Dīgha-Nikāya*, P.T.S, Vol. III, pp. 180-93.
26. Ibid. Vol. III, p. 151.
27. Ibid p. 245; *Āṅguttara*, Ibid. p. 288f.
28. *Dīgha*, Ibid. Vol. II, p. 77; *Āṅguttara*, Ibid. Vol. IV, p.20.
29. *Sutta Vibhaṅga* 28, 30; quoted from John H Piet, Ibid. p. 31.
30. *Dīgha*, Ibid. Vol. II, p. 100-111; *Samyutta*, Ibid. Vol. V, p. 154; *attano guṇa eva attano dīpaṃ katvā*, *Suttanipāta*, verse 501.

# **The Buddha and the Contemporary Educational Crises: A Dialogue between Buddhism and Modern Educational Theories**

**Rana Purushottam Kumar Singh**

Over a period of more than two millennia, the Buddha has been looked upon by umpteen generations of yore across the globe as one of the most eminent and outstanding teachers of humankind who ever set their feet on our planet. It goes without saying that the invaluable repository of his teachings and theories, being valid at all places and at all points of time, continues to enrich the various dimensions of our existence in as many ways as one could practically think of.

One major attribute of the grand and imperishable philosophical and cultural legacy that the Buddha's teachings encompass is the enormity of its purview as well as its unquestionable relevance unrestrained by the frontiers of space and time. Given the quantum of impact his teachings have cast on diverse spheres of life, it would rather be too simplistic to say that they have been instrumental in bringing about significant and, to a considerable degree, desired changes in the society.

The first change introduced by the Buddha in the society came about through his fundamental notion of education. It encapsulates an array of subsidiary notions including those that specifically relate to the concepts of ignorance and knowledge. In the Buddhist system of philosophical-epistemological discourse, ignorance does not merely signify the lack of information. Instead, it is primarily an expression of the fundamental human condition, an analysis of the very structure by which we know something. It follows then, that knowledge cannot be reduced to information, but is a radical restructuring of the way in which we 'know'.

In Buddhism, this restructuring of the way in which we know has very direct stereological impact. Through the development of wisdom (*paññā*), one develops insight into the habitual patterning of mind and the skilful means (*upāya*) as to how one cuts through such patterns. This process of

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learning leads to the willingness to work for the welfare of all living beings, so much so that compassion becomes the pivotal aspect of learning in Buddhism. Buddhist education thus begins with a comprehensive insight into individual suffering and devotes itself to the alleviation of the suffering of all.

Just as the Buddhist notion of education must always be understood in the context of overcoming *avijjā*, the fundamental egoistic structuring of one's experience, so a Buddhist notion of teaching must be understood as aiding the overcoming of suffering, and not merely the conveying of information. For a follower or practitioner of Buddhism, this essentially involves not only the teaching of the Dhamma, but also instruction in rather 'secular' aspects of life such as medicine and agriculture. It is rooted in the fundamental assumption that ignorance of these matters reflects the suffering of the common people.

The frontiers of the Buddha's teachings are undoubtedly much broader in their purview. In fact, they have compelled thinkers, teachers visionaries, pedagogues and all those involved in the task of positive and progressive social change, to change themselves. In other words, they have brought about a radical change in the mindset accounting for changes in the society.

The Buddha perceived the need for such changes before anyone else. He therefore charted and spelt out his agenda of positive change in the fundamental pattern of teaching and learning process in India. While delivering his first sermon, he invited the monks for the weal and welfare of the common people, and further suggested his disciples to move out of their hermitage and interact with the society and people for their own benefit.<sup>1</sup> By doing so, he actually scripted a great turning point in the history of human civilization, marking a radical departure from the orthodox practices and modes of teaching and learning.

The Buddha first framed a strict monastic structure to provide teachers to the society. He prescribed disciplinary rules in *Vinaya Pīṭaka*, the text of discipline, and the process of becoming *Sāmaṇera* and *Bhikkhu* through *Pabbajjā* and *Upasampadā*.<sup>2</sup> Then, after laying down rules for a mature teacher who could make a positive contribution to the welfare and progress of the society, he gave certain revolutionary instructions clearly enjoining people not to believe in what they have heard, and in tradition, because they are handed down for many generations. He further stated that one should not also believe in anything on the authority of the teachers or elders thinking that they are respected. He said that when one knows for oneself, after

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observation and analysis, that ensure that these things are moral, blameless, praised by the wise and when performed and undertaken, conduce to well being and happiness of one and all. It is only then that one should accept it and live up to it.<sup>3</sup> Another important feature of Buddhist learning is “Yathānulomasānam”, selection of topic and means of teaching like examples, similes, parables according to the mental status of the learners. This is because the objective of the Buddhist system of education and the process of mental development connected with it, is the liberation of suffering individual from all kind of bondages. This liberation is to be achieved by each individual at his own pace and through his own practices. In this process of liberation, the teacher is a facilitator or a guide.

A very important task assigned to a teacher in the Buddhist system of education is to find out the individual differences among the pupils and to design each one's course of training to suit his particular traits. <sup>4</sup> This process of learning is not an end by itself, but one that leads to self-realization, which is equated in Buddhism to the deliverance of liberation. What leads a particular person to self-realization is a series of strictly personal experiences which cannot be reproduced at random to apply to any other individual. Time involved in the process is as variable as the techniques. Even directly under the Buddha's personal instruction, some took years to reach the goal of self-realization while others achieved it in just one session. Training and monastic education imparted to monks has produced miraculous result in India. A close examination of history categorically reveals that only progenies of royal personages and scholars could have an access to the house of teachers for proper education during the Vedic age. Moreover, all the knowledge and learning they acquired was restricted to tiny pockets of life, away from the world at large. To state this differently, common people never interacted with the literate, knowledgeable blue-blood scions who got education within the precincts of their teacher's house located usually in the secluded wild. The pedagogical method introduced by the Buddha reversed this trend by opening the doors of education and learning to all people, irrespective of their social status in an extremely stratified system. Besides, this method could yield result immediately, manifested in the form of the *Theragāthā* and the *Therīgāthā*, the text of elders. Some of the best-known and most celebrated beneficiaries of Buddha's education were Upāli, Mahākassapa, Sāriputta, Aṅgulimāla etc. besides a farmer like Dhaniya and sweepers of Rajgir. The kind of pedagogical instructional method propagated by Buddhism proved to be beneficial to all groups of society. Due to

the path breaking initiative taken by the Buddha, most of the people of Middle land (Majjhadesa) became educated and the higher subject matter of education became the matter of discourse and discussion among all strata of society, from the members of the ruling classes to the poorest of people.

In contemporary world, science and technology are in such an advanced stage that one can literally see the various events happening anywhere in the world. Humongous feats in these areas have enabled man to achieve almost everything in material life that he craves for. Ironically, however, the world has not achieved the hundred percent literacy and education. There is still a yawning gap between the literate and the illiterate people in our society. As the latest data from U.N.O, UNESCO, ECOSOC, Govt. of India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and African Countries clearly suggest, millions and millions of people are deprived of education. Women in particular are totally ostracized from the channels of proper education. The total literacy In India is 74%<sup>5</sup> women literacy is much lesser than the male in India. In Pakistan, 18% women<sup>6</sup> are educated. Literacy rate in Bangladesh is 57.7%; male literacy is 61.3% female literacy 52.2%.<sup>7</sup> In Sudan, only 27% population are literate.

The situation has now assumed alarming proportions in many countries across the world. The Buddhist response to the situation is very clear. The world has to adopt the measures at micro level. Each and every society has its own problem and style of thinking and living. The policy making agencies have to change their attitude. Today, UNESCO and other agencies provide funds to the governments in a conventional manner without taking into consideration their socio-economic needs. One has to form policies for smaller groups and initiate the culture for volunteer services. The Buddha invited the monks to go to society for the well-being of the masses. In the same way, volunteers can go to the house of the subjects and try to educate and inspire them for further learning.

Apart from illiteracy, there is another problem, i.e. the problem of lack of value education that leads the society to the situation of consumerism, insensitive intense competition and minimal human concern.

Modern thinkers have paid attention to understanding the need of value education or ethical way of learning. History as well as current experience points to the fact that it is not nature but man who provides the primary resource: that the key factor of all economic, cultural scientific and social development comes out of the mind of man. Suddenly, there is an outburst of daring initiative, invention, constructive activity, not in one field alone,



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but we can see how it maintains and even strengthens itself: though various kinds of school in other words through education.<sup>8</sup> In a very real sense, therefore, we can say that education is the most vital of all resources. In fact the belief in education is so strong that we treat it as the residual legatee of all our problems. If the nuclear age brings new dangers; if the advance of genetic engineering opens the doors to new abuses; if commercialisms brings new temptation the answers must be more and better education.<sup>9</sup>

First and foremost, there is urgency for the transmission of ideas of value of what to do with our lives. There is no doubt also about the need to transmit the knowhow but this must take second place for it is obviously somewhat foolhardy to put great powers into the hands of people without making sure that they have a reasonable idea of what to do with them. At present, there can be little doubt that the whole of mankind is in mortal danger, not because we are short of scientific and technological know, but because we tend to use it destructively, without wisdom. Buddhist education is based on three pillars, viz. morality (Sīla), concentration or one-pointedness (samādhi) and wisdom (paññā). All kinds of learning process, inventions and use of the resources should be guided by moral precepts, one should practice meditation and attain the stage of wisdom, with which one knows the real nature of the world that all formations are impermanent, all formations are matter of suffering and there is no entity like soul in human personality. When a person will get training in such type of wisdom he will never be in position to misuse any type of thing, idea or resource. Lack of wisdom is very dangerous. Today, the world is witnessing the mayhem of innocent human beings in the name of religion, race, caste etc. It shows the lack of wisdom or lack of complete education in the world. The Buddha gives a small tip in his sermon warning against indulgence in the sinful acts and cultivation of moral tendencies, and emphasizing purification of one's own mind this is the teachings of all Buddhas.<sup>10</sup>

The Buddha has clearly advised the path for better society. The problematic system of education can create danger to the society. The problems of education are merely reflections of the deepest problems of our age. The problems cannot be addressed by any organization, administration or the financial resources even though the importance of all these is not denied.

The present world is in the throes of a metaphysical malady and the care must therefore be metaphysical. Education that fails to clarify our central convictions is mere training or indulgence. For it is our central convictions that are in disorder and as long as the present disorder persists

the situation will grow worse. Education far from ranking as man's greatest resource will then be an agent of destruction.<sup>11</sup>

The vivid example of metaphysical malady is the killing of innocent people in different parts of the world and the worst example of valueless education in invention of atomic weapons. Everybody knows that these are the means of mass destruction but no election in the world have been fought against the making of these weapons of mass destruction. The Buddha has strictly prohibited the business of arms <sup>12</sup> which is the most flourishing business in the world. All nations want to shell their weapons to others. The Buddha has tried to identify the mental disorder led by religious erroneous views. Because of wrong perception a man thinks in reverse direction and everybody moves towards bad direction ultimately the society suffers.

The third aspect of the proposed paper will be a close and elaborate investigation into the existing method and theories that are in vogue in our society and the world at large. An attempt will be made to discuss how the Buddha went on to challenge the notions and practices prescribed by their previous teachers and thinkers.

Through his timeless teachings, the Buddha has offered tool and means to impart true education to the society with a view to making it free from suffering. After a logical examination, it can be stated that the Buddhist education are error free. This is absolutely applicable throughout the world and cannot be impaired by time and space. The Buddha always examined the existing suppositions which were the guiding factors of the society. He exposed those suppositions which lend the society in suffering, due to the prevalence of erroneous views or taking that which is true to be false and that which is false to be true.

The Buddha talks about three kind of erroneous views acting together simultaneously or singularly due to which we tend to harbor misconceived notions or misunderstandings about the world. This is the root cause of all sufferings in life. In this regard, he exposes all kinds of Vipallāsa perverted or erroneous views. The understanding of perverted views offers us alternative situations to visualize the reality from totally different angle. From the Buddhist point of view, it may be said that the notions of non-eternity (asubha) are of relative nature for different people of the society where as their opposite i.e eternity (nicca), pleasure (sukha) cosmic self (atta) and auspicious (subha) imply a totally different picture. It may be further stated that the two sets of notions as described above may be useful for different people of society for their moral purification and because of the fact that

they arise out of wisdom or true knowledge. It appears that both these sets of notions must have been prevalent involving the wishful thinking of the humanity at large, which was converted into a positive thinking through the medium of perverted views. It appears that the moral habit of the people at large is interested in looking at things, in a positive way instead of in a negative way and in this connection while talking about a perverted view it can be said that the perverted view which regards the repulsive as attractive is obviously almost entirely a matter of wishful thinking.<sup>13</sup> Buddhism like most religious systems distinguished two sets of facts, or two worlds.<sup>14</sup> Keeping this in view the notion of relativity a similar idea has been expressed by Chadrakirti when he says that without ignoring auspicious (subha) there is not inauspicious (asubha).<sup>15</sup> In the Pali canonical Texts we find references to Vipallāsa in the Aṅguttaranikāya, Paṭisambhidāmagga and Visuddhimagga.<sup>16</sup>

When we try to trace the cause of Vipallāsa, we can notice that ignorance or lack of true education is the cause of wrong views.<sup>17</sup> One under the sway of ignorance, mistakes the impermanent for permanent because of one's illusion about truth.<sup>18</sup> Samvriti covers the real nature of truth and reveals it only as covered by itself, and is also called ignorance (avijjā), delusion (Moha) and vipallāsa.<sup>19</sup> It should be noted that every Vipallāsa pertains to perception, mind/thought and view point. For a practical understanding of the process of Vipallāsa to take place, first of all we have the perception of a particular situation. This perception further molds our mind according to our earlier perception of a particular situation, then the mind further helps us in developing our own view point in relation to a particular situation. Thus we can easily observe that the perception moves further to make a way for the mind to make its own assessment of a situation and then finally the mind further helped us in developing our view point (diṭṭhi) for a particular situation.

Outstanding Buddhist teachers like Nāgārjuna studied vipallāsa in a very scientific manner. He traces interrelationship between the four types of vipallāsa. He tries to trace vipallāsa regarding what is pleasant and unpleasant where the non-substantial (ānatmā) is identified with substantial (ātma). Here, Nagarjuna is basically keeping the metaphysical situation in his mind; because of this world what we find is that people have some liking for the substantial (ātma) whereas they abhor the non-substantial (ānatama). It can be inferred that this type of a situation can be traced back to the Brahmanical

influence on the people in general; but due to the emergence of the Buddhist philosophical schools and ideas, a total change accord in the attitude of the people and on the other hand the people were made to feel their inclination of the sense of unpleasantness with the notion of the substantial (ātma). Considering that viāppallāsa is essentially the identification of the inauspicious (asubha) with the auspicious, it appears that the notion of defilement (klesa) is associated with the notion of the pleasant (sukha) and the unpleasant (dukkha). Because of this kind of erroneous view, man suffers.

The Buddha says that birth is suffering because the chain of death and birth is the greatest cause of suffering. Buddhism provides ways and methods to break the chain of death and birth. The Buddha further says that decay is suffering, distance is suffering, death is suffering, association with the persons who are not near and dear is suffering, separation from near and dear is suffering, whatever we desire, but do not get is suffering, and ultimately, the five aggregates of personality is suffering. According to Buddhist teachings, this is the basic classification of suffering. However, most of the people take opposite meaning and types of suffering. Common man who is Puthujjana thinks that the world is place of happiness. Getting all kinds of consumer items is matter of happiness but Buddhist way of life presents different kind of perception. Happiness and suffering lie in our mind bases on perception. There is the notion of impermanence, non-substantiality and suffering but because of wrong views majority thinks that everything is permanent, there is entity like soul and the life is full of happiness. This type of perception creates suffering at micro level and at macro level too. This false notion creates greediness, craving, corruption, hatred, communalism, violence etc.

The Buddhist position is quite different from the popular perception. Buddhism always talks about the quintessential unity of human society. Accordingly, there is commonality in all human being ;no one is high or no one is low only on the basis birth. Instead of that, higher and lower position is based on the action (Karma) performed by the person concerned not by any external agent.<sup>20</sup>

There is a big Misconception regarding the human personality. In this paper, an attempt has been made to expatiate on how certain fundamental misunderstanding about human personality can be rectified in the light of Buddhist teachings. One of the glaring misconceptions we have is that the human personality is made of god. The Buddha says that all bodily and

mentally agreeable as well as disagreeable sensations besides all indifferent sensations enjoyed by beings in the present state of existence are created by our thought. In reality, human personality is the sum total of five aggregates. All these are guided by our thought process which is controlled by consciousness. Thus, human consciousness is the dynamic continuum that extends to an infinite cycle of births and deaths. As a matter of fact, all our psychological experiences, all things we consider to be good and evil, as also the phenomena such as life and death that determines our physical existence are outcomes of thoughts and its resultant actions which cannot be attributed to external agencies. This is the real understanding of personality.

**End Note :**

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2. Ibid.
3. Kesamutti Sutta, Anguttaranikaya, vol. I, ed. Swami Dwarikadas Shastri, Bauddha Bharti, Baranasi, India, 2002, p. 278.
4. Guruge Anand W.P, The Contribution of Buddhism to Education, p. 142.
5. UNESCO : Literacy ([http:// portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php](http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php)).
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7. Ibid.
8. Schumacher E.F, Small is Beautiful, ABACUS London, 1974.
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12. Dīghnikāya, Vol.11, ed. Swami Dwarikadas Shastri, Bauddha Bharti, Baranasi, India, 1996, p. 305.
13. Edward conge, Buddhist Thought in India p.40.
14. Ibid p.p. 43.44.
15. Madhyamakesastra 23.1 I, p.200.
16. I. Anguttaranikaya, 4.9, pp.72-73.  
II. Patisambhidamagga p.32.  
III. Visuddhimagga, XXXII 53, p.799.
17. Viparyasa hetu avidya, madhyantavibhagasutrabhasya, p.35.
18. Ibid p.35.
19. Bodhicaryavatara, 9.2.
20. Dīghnikāya, Vol.III, ed. Swami Dwarikadas Shastri, Bauddha Bharti, Baranasi, India, 1996, p.765.

# **Bodhisatta and Bodhisattva : A Comparative Note on Theravāda and Mahāyāna Concept**

**Ujjwal Kumar**

## **I. Introduction**

Increasing numbers of modern scholars of Theravada Buddhism have argued that a major conventional distinction between the Theravada and Mahayana traditions -namely, the former advocates the relatively self-centered pursuit of *Arahantship* and the latter preaches the *Bodhisattva* goal of helping sentient beings - is a misguided notion. This paper contends that a study of the differences and commonalities between the Theravadin *Bodhisatta* and the Mahayanist *Bodhisattva* ideals will support the thesis that both Buddhist schools support the pursuit of altruistic compassion. While the *Bodhisatta* concept seems to refer mainly to the early incarnations of the Gotama Buddha (as well as past and future Buddha-s), it can also be interpreted to accommodate *Savaka-Bodhisatta-s* who are as devoted to working for their fellow beings as *Mahayanist-Bodhisattva-s*. Commonalities between the *Bodhisatta* and *Bodhisattva* precepts are not confined to their goals of seeking wisdom and doing good work. Aspects of their training, for example, the accomplishment of the *parami* or *paramita-s*, also exhibit tell-tale similarities.

After defining the *Bodhisatta* concept in the Pali Tradition, this paper will make comparisons between the ideals, aspirations and training of the *Bodhisatta* and the *Bodhisattva*. Reference will also be made to Zen or Chan Buddhism, where the concept of the *Boddhisattva* is radically different from that of early or conventional Mahayana Buddhism. The paper will conclude that different interpretations of the *Bodhisatta/Bodhisattva* ideals reflect elements of doctrinal convictions as well as relevant social norms and requirements as Buddhism evolved through the ages.

## **II. The Bodhisatta Concept in Theravāda Buddhism**

### **A. Definition of the *Bodhisatta* in the Pāli Canon**

The birth of Gotama as *Bodhisatta* and future Buddha is set forth in wondrous splendor in the *Acchariya-abbhuta Sutta*, the *Mahapādāna Sutta*

and a number of other *sutta-s* in the *Nikāya-s*.<sup>1</sup> Yet it is significant that generically, the *Bodhisatta* is characterized in the early part of the Pali Canon as little more than a humble supplicant seeking higher knowledge and wisdom. As Toshiichi Endo (1997: 220) notes, “no marked difference is seen between the *Bodhisatta* and any other mendicants who also seek the realization of the truth.” Thus, Buddhism expert T. Sugimoto has listed six usages of the word *Bodhisatta* in the *Nikāya-s*, which include “the *Bodhisatta* who is imperfect and immature”; “the *Bodhisatta* who is a wanderer and an ascetic”; and “the *Bodhisatta* who dreams of the great dreams” (Barua: No Date of Publication, hereafter ND).

It is important to note that from the very beginning, the hallmark of a *Bodhisatta* is not dissimilar to that of the Mahāyānist *Bodhisattva*: compassion. As Bhikkhu Bodhi (2005: 44) pointed out, “a *Bodhisatta* undertakes a long course of spiritual development consciously motivated by the aspiration to attain future Buddhahood.” “Inspired and sustained by great compassion for living beings mired in the suffering of birth and death, a *Bodhisatta* fulfills, over many eons of cosmic time, the difficult course needed to fully master the requisites for supreme Enlightenment.” For example, the *Suttanipāta*, which is part of the Khuddaka Nikāya, depicts the Gotama *Bodhisatta* as “the excellent pearl, the incomparable, [who] is born for [the] good and for [the] blessing in the world of men” (Brewster 2000: 3). The *Jataka* tales of the “previous lives” of the Buddha are replete with the future Gotama’s singular acts of compassion and salvation of his fellowmen.<sup>2</sup>

Yet as the glorification of the Gotama Buddha became more intense in the latter half of the Canonical period, we witness a rising of the threshold regarding the *Bodhisatta*’s basic qualifications. Take, for example, the multiple merits and accomplishments that the Gotama Buddha-to-be is said to have accumulated in his earlier incarnations. As Bhikkhu Analayo (2010: 55) noted, “once the *Bodhisattva* is perceived as being already accomplished at birth, his progress towards such accomplishment must have taken place earlier, before his birth.” The aspirant Buddha must also make a distinctive - and highly emotionally charged - vow, and seek the blessings and “predictions” of every previous Buddha beginning with Buddha Diapaṅkara.<sup>3</sup>

The *Buddhavaṃsa* further lists eight conditions (*atthadhammasamodhana*) as indispensable criteria for becoming a *Bodhisatta*. They include being human beings of the male sex (, “possession of special qualities,” “fulfillment of proper deeds” and “will-power.”<sup>4</sup> More significantly, the ten *pārami* or perfections are introduced as training that every bodhisatta

must go through. These are *dāna*, *sīla*, *nekkhamma*, *paññā*, *vīriya*, *khanti*, *sacca*, *adhiṭṭhāna*, *mettā* and *upekkhā*.<sup>5</sup> For example, *dāna* (giving) refers to the Buddha aspirant making sacrifices of his properties, belongings, his happiness, and even parts of his body and his life.<sup>6</sup>

## **B. Definition of the *Bodhisatta* in the Commentarial and post-Commentarial Literature**

The “bar” for becoming a *Bodhisatta* continues to be elevated in the commentarial literature. Thus, the concept of the “eighteen impossible states” of birth for a *Bodhisatta* comes to the forefront. Equally significant is the fact that there is stricter delineation of the time needed for a *Bodhisatta* to finish his pupilage - the attainment of the *parami* -required for *Buddhahood*. Thus, the Aṭṭhakathāns sets forth the time frames of four, eight or sixteen *asankheyya*-s and a hundred thousand *kappa*-s, depending on the individual qualities of different types of *Bodhisatta*-s (Endo 1997: 252). Moreover, the *Buddhavarhṣa* and later, the commentarial authority Dhammapala, set forth the three-fold hierarchy of the *pārami*: the “ordinary” ten perfections, the ten higher perfections (*upapārami*-s), and the ten ultimate perfections (*paramatthapārami*). The *paramatthapārami* is reserved for *Bodhisatta*-s who are aiming for the fullest, boundless Enlightenment.<sup>7</sup>

Four categories of the *Bodhisatta* are identified in the commentaries: firstly, a wise or insightful being; secondly, a being on the way to awakening; thirdly, a being worthy of attaining *sammāsambodhi* or striving for it; and fourthly, a being attached to or inclined towards *bodhi*. More attention is given by these later Pāli texts to the third and fourth categories. Moreover, detailed differentiation is made of three specific types of *bodhi* corresponding to as many sub-sets of Buddhist adherents: the *sāvaka-bodhi*, the *pacceka-bodhi*, and the *sammāsambodhi*. The *sammāsambodhi* is the category to be acquired by *Bodhisatta*-s destined to become Buddha-s.<sup>8</sup> Thus Dhammapala mentions three varieties of *Bodhisatta*-s: the *maha-bodhisatta*, the *pacceka-bodhisatta* and the *sāvaka-bodhisatta*.<sup>9</sup> Given the increasingly rigorous prerequisites for attaining Buddhahood, the path of the *sāvaka-bodhisatta* is apparently offered to “less ambitious” novices as a more practical alternative. As Endo (1997: 241) noted, “when the path leading to Buddhahood was made more difficult... the Theravādins had to emphasise the importance of following the *sāvaka-bodhi* more than before as the alternative and easier way to emancipation”. As we shall discuss below, while according to some interpretations, the *sāvaka-bodhisatta* seems principally concerned with



achieving *arahantship*, his goals and practices have increasingly taken on shades of the Mahāyānist ideal of altruism *iiber alles*.

### III. Comparisons between the Bodhisatta and the Bodhisattva Ideals

#### A. The Concept of the Bodhisattva Ideal

To a certain extent, the emergence of the *Bodhisattva* precept in Mahāyāna Buddhism can be interpreted as a reaction against the apparently selfish and isolationist ideal of *Arhatship*, which Har Dayal (1999: 4) deemed “doubly defective.” As Dayal indicated the *Arhatship* “disregarded the higher duty of acquiring the perfect Wisdom of a Buddha; and it deprived the world of the services of the holy men and women who had attained *Nirvāṇa* and passed away”.

And while, as we shall see, the trajectory of the *Bodhisattva* is fraught with enormous difficulties and tribulations, it is a key Mahāyāna doctrine that every person is a candidate to become *Bodhisattva* - and Buddha. That “Buddha nature” (or the potentiality to become a Buddha) resides in every person - in fact, every sentient being including animals - is taught by vastly influential texts such as the *Great Nirvāṇa Sūtra*, the *Avatamsaka* or *Flower Garland Sūtra*, and the *Tathāgatagarbha Sūtra*. The *Tathāgatagarbha Sūtra*, for example, simply states that “all sentient beings contain a Tathāgata” (Williams 2009: 104). A key component of the Buddha nature is *bodhicitta*, which means the spirit of awakening and enlightenment. On a more secular level, *bodhicitta* is intimately associated with the seed of *karma*. It follows that at least theoretically, every person is a potential *Bodhisattva* who can become a Buddha through developing his *karuṇā* and allied virtues.<sup>10</sup> Shantideva, the great 8<sup>th</sup> Century Mahāyānist who authored *Bodhicaryāvatāra* (*A Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life*), thus describes the *Bodhisattva* whose *bodhicitta* seed is germinating: “When the Spirit of Awakening has arisen, in an instant a wretch who is bound in the prison of the cycle of existence... becomes worthy of reverence in the worlds of gods and humans.”<sup>11</sup>

Given that in the Mahāyāna tradition, supreme importance is attached to the exercise of *karuṇā* and the performance of good deeds, particularly influential and meritorious *Bodhisattva*-s often take center stage - to the extent of seeming to sideline Buddha-s.<sup>12</sup> Take the case of the *Bodhisattva* Avalokitesvara or Kuan Yin, one of the most revered *Bodhisattva* in Asia. Avalokitesvara, the protagonist of the *Avalokitesvara Sūtra* and the *Surāṅgama Sūtra*, supposedly possesses powers that dwarf many a run-of-the-mill Bud-

dha. Avalokitesvara is described in these Sūtras as “much greater than the Buddha-s in merit, intelligence and sphere of influence” (Dayal 1999: 49). This is also true of the uncannily resourceful Vimalakīrti in the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra*, a “lay Bodhisattva” whose earth-shattering prowess is legendary.<sup>13</sup> This and other traits of the *Bodhisattva* are major departures from the *Bodhisatta* concept.

## **B. Comparison between the “Apprenticeship” of the Bodhisatta and the Bodhisattva**

### **(i) The Training of the Bodhisattva: Pāramitās and Bhūmi-s**

Somewhat similar to the Theravāda tradition, there is no uniformity regarding the exact training or apprenticeship procedures for the *Bodhisattva*. The common “qualifications” are that *Bodhisattva-s* must accomplish the six *pāramitā-s* (perfections) and the ten *bhūmi-s* or stages. However, there are dissimilar descriptions of the *pāramitā-s*, and in particular, the *bhūmi-s*, in the Indian, Chinese, and Tibetan traditions. For instance, the *bhūmi-s* are cited at length in texts such as the *Sātra on the Ten Stages (Dasabhumika)*, which is equivalent to the 26<sup>th</sup> chapter of the popular *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*. Another famous *sūtra* on the same subject is the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* by the great Yogācāra master Asaṅga (Nakamura 1987: 257). An attempt to bring the disparate descriptions of the *bhūmis* into line was made by the great Sanskrit commentator Kamalasīla’s *Bhāvanākrama* (Williams 2009: 200).

The six chief *pāramitā-s* are given ample play in the great *Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra-s*. They are *Dāna*, *Śīla*, *Santi*, *Virya*, *Dhyāna* and *Prajñā*. Some texts also list four so-called “supplementary” *pāramitā-s*, namely *Upāya*, *Pranidhāna*, *Bala* and *Jñāna*.<sup>14</sup> Scholars such as E. J. Thomas and Har Dayal have given reasons for the extension of the six to ten. For example, Dayal claimed that this was to fit in with the invention of the decimal system in the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> century AD (Dayal 1999: 167). *Pāramitā-s* such as *Dāna* and *Śīla* overlap with several of the Theravādin *pārami*. It could also be argued a few of the *pāramitā-s* were tailored to the Mahāyānist imperative of providing succor to sentient beings. Thus the ideal of *virya* incorporates *sikṣā-virya*, or energy sufficient for the acquisition of myriad kinds of knowledge including medicine and technical arts and crafts. The latter would be useful skills in helping fellow beings. The same could be said of *Upāya* (skilful means), including dexterous ways to convert and help people of different personalities. For example, a major theme of the *Vimalakīrti Sūtra* is the development of skilful means to help people, including those with apparently unsavory characters and professions.<sup>22</sup>

While the *Bodhisattva* accumulates merits and gains wisdom through practicing the *pāramitā-s*, he simultaneously goes up the hierarchy of the ten *bhūmi-s*: from the first Stage of Joy to the last one, the “Cloud of Dharma” Stage.<sup>16</sup> It is interesting that at the sixth Stage of “Approaching,” the aspirant attains the perfection of wisdom which could enable him to become an *Arahanta*. However, he chooses not to enter *Nirvāṇa* but instead focuses on perfecting skill-in-means needed for helping more sentient beings (Harvey 1990: 123). After attaining the last stage, the Bodhisattva “can manifest all the deeds in the earthly life of a Buddha as many times as he wishes throughout innumerable worlds” (Williams 2009: 207). While the training of a *Bodhisattva* evidently takes innumerable *kalpa-s*, the Mahāyānists do not seem to have given a meticulous specification of the relevant time-frames as is the case of the Theravādin-s.

## **(ii) The Bodhisattva Concept and Training in the Chinese Zen (Chan) Tradition**

Perhaps reflecting the wishes of growing numbers of converts for simpler ways of attaining enlightenment, a few Mahāyāna schools such as the Zen or *Chan* - whose adherents in China, Japan, Korea and elsewhere make up a sizeable bloc of global Buddhists today - have pretty much dispensed with traditional teachings about the six *pāramitā-s* and the *bhūmi-s*.<sup>17</sup> This is most evident in the teachings of Master Huineng (638-713 AD), the Sixth Patriarch of *Chan* and putative author of the epochal *Platform Sūtra*. Building upon the Mahāyāna concept of the universality of the *bodhicitta* - that everyone is a potential Bodhisattva and Buddha - Huineng lays down a systematic yet down-to-earth schema for the “self-attainment of Buddhahood.”<sup>18</sup> “The Sūtras clearly say one should take refuge in the Buddha [in] oneself,” Huineng instructs. He also indicates that “all the Buddha-s of the three periods of time and the twelve divisions of the canon are fundamentally and naturally immanent within the natures of people.”<sup>19</sup>

Following Bodhidharma the First Patriarch of Zen, Huineng teaches that what is required for the *everyman-bodhisattva* to attain Buddhahood is simply recognizing the “Buddha nature” in himself. “If you recognize your own mind and see the nature, you will definitely accomplish the enlightenment of Buddhahood,” he says.<sup>20</sup> Yet as *Chan* scholar John McRae pointed out, “How can one change oneself so that one becomes able to perceive the Buddha Nature within?”<sup>21</sup> Most of Huineng’s teachings consist in “mind training”: making sure that his students can develop a nimble mind to

jettison the defilements and “see” the Buddha in themselves in a process sometimes described as “sudden realization”. Although the Sixth Patriarch has not done away with studying the *Sūtra-s*, he counsels that the mind should not be obsessed with doctrines, “wisdom” or “truth.” As he repeatedly warns: “For the mind to reside in the *dharmas* is called ‘fettering oneself’.”<sup>22</sup>

While the Sixth Patriarch also urges his disciples to value traditional virtues such as *Dāna* and *Sīla*, the practice of these and other *pāramitā-like* ideals is not seen as a prerequisite for accomplishing Buddhahood. As Buddhism historian Kenneth Ch’en noted, the contribution of Huineng and his fellow Chan masters is that they “broke away from the Indian dependence upon the sacred scriptures, objects of worship, rituals and metaphysical speculation to build up a school of Buddhism which favored a plain, direct, concrete and practical approach to Enlightenment.”<sup>23</sup>

#### IV. Commonalities between the Bodhisatta and Bodhisattva Ideals

With the ever-more intense apotheosis of the Gotama Buddha, the threshold for becoming a *sammāsambuddha* became higher and higher. As argued in an earlier section of this paper, this culminated in the threefold hierarchy of the perfections: the *pārami*, the *upapārami* and the *paramatthapārami*. For less ambitious - perhaps the majority of - Buddhist converts, the *Sāaka* (or *Sravaka*) path might have become more practical and attractive. As Venerable Walpola Rahula noted, “although the Theravāda holds that anybody can be a *Bodhisattva*, it does not stipulate or insist that all must be *Bodhisattva* which is considered not practical.” “The decision is left to the individual whether to take the Path of the *Srāvaka* or of the *Pratyekabuddha* or of the *Samyaksambuddha*.”<sup>24</sup> The path of the *Srāvaka* is in many ways akin to that of the Mahāyānist *Bodhisattva*. While the goal of a *Srāvaka* is attaining *Nirvāṇa*, he also serves fellow beings, even though his capacity to do so may be limited. Similarly, Bhikkhu Bodhi argued that “the oldest *sutta-s* already mention three types of individuals who attain to the consummate state,” namely, the *sammāsambuddha*, the *paccekabuddha*, and the disciple *arahat*. Bhikkhu Bodhi characterizes the *Srāvaka* as having traits similar to those of the Mahāyānist *Bodhisattva*: one who “realizes the goal through the instruction of a supreme Buddha and then teaches others according to his inclination and capacity.”<sup>25</sup>

The *Sandhinirmocana Sūtra*, also known as *The Scripture on the Explanation of Underlying Meaning*, which is a relatively early Mahāyānist text,

explicitly points out that “the vehicle of the word-hearers [*Srāvaka-s*] and the great vehicle [Mahāyāna] are but a single vehicle.”<sup>26</sup> The *Sūtra* quotes the Buddha as telling Avalokitesvara: “In the word-hearers’ vehicle I have taught the various essences of all things, the five aggregates... In the great vehicle I have taught that all those things are identical with the reality realm, with the one principle. Thus I do not teach that these vehicles are different. But some engender false, discriminative ideas by taking the literal sense of my meaning.”<sup>27</sup>

As Bhikkhu Bodhi explained: “as time passed ... perhaps partly through the influence of the Mahāyāna, the *Bodhisattva* ideal must have come to acquire an increasing appeal for the minds of the Buddhist populace, and the need became felt for a work explaining in a practical manner the factors and phases of the *pāramitā* path without deviating from the established doctrinal position of the Theravāda ,”<sup>28</sup> Bodhi and Endo both indicated that the one late-Theravada authority who has in a way breached the gap between the *Bodhisatta* and the *Bodhisattva* ideals is the great commentator Dhammapala.

According to Endo, Dhammapala made a distinctive contribution by his threefold classification of the *Bodhisatta-s*: namely, the *mahabodhisatta*, the *pacckebodhisatta* and the *sāvakabodhisatta*, thus giving “a theoretical background that even the disciples... can practice the perfections.” Added Endo (1997: 298): “by defining the word *pārami* to mean *bhava* or *kamma* ... he expands the scope of its application, whereby it is possible to uphold that not only a *Bodhisatta*, but also a disciple, can practice the perfections.” Perhaps more importantly, Dhammapala’s reclassification and reinterpretation of the ten traditional Theravāda *pārami* would seem to indicate that he had fallen under Mahāyāna influence. Thus the great exegete notes that several of the traditional *pārami* are redundant and that they can be pared down to six. His list of the six *pārami*, which ends with *paññā*, is surprisingly similar to that of the Mahāyāna order, which ends with *prajñā*. For *Savaka-s* (as well as other similarly qualified Theravada converts) who find it impractical to aspire to the “higher levels” of the *Bodhisatta* ideal - but who also want to focus on teaching and benefiting fellow human beings - Dhammapala’s reworked, quasi-Mahāyānist *pārami* could serve as a most skilful means indeed.

Moreover, it is significant that Dhammapala’s interpretation of *paññā* is Mahāyāna-like. “Wisdom is the chief cause for the practice of the other *pārami*,” he notes. “For when their wisdom-eyes open up, the great *Bodhisatta-s* give even their own limbs and organs... By means of wisdom,

the act of relinquishing, exercised with skillful means and practiced for the welfare of others, [the *Bodhisatta*] attains the status of a *pāramī* (see Bodhi ND). Dhammapala also reminds us that “a Great Being who has formed his aspiration for supreme enlightenment should... always be zealous in providing for the welfare of beings.” “From time to time, day by day, [a *Bodhisatta*] should reflect.. .What have I done for the welfare of others?” he adds (see Bodhi ND).

American scholar Jeffrey Samuels (1997) has sought to breach the gap between the *Bodhisatta* and the *Bodhisattva* ideals from a different angle. He argued that the *Bodhisatta* ideal in the Pali tradition is not solely used to describe the Gotama Buddha, the past Buddha-s, or the future Buddha Maitreya. Samuels pointed out that texts such as the *Cakkavattisihanāda Sutta* and the *Sampasādaniya Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* make reference to the possibility of an unspecific number of future Buddha-s - and thus *Bodhisatta*-s. “The *Bodhisatta-yāna* is regarded as a possible, albeit difficult, path open to anyone who desires buddhahood,” he noted. He added that this was “illustrated in the lives of numerous Theravādin kings, monks, and textual copyists who have taken the *Bodhisatta* vow and are following the *Bodhisatta-yaṇa* to the eventual attainment of buddhahood.” This characterization of the “*everyman-bodhisatta*” reminds us of the celebration of the Buddha nature in all sentient beings that is evident in both the conventional and *Chan* Mahāyāna schools.

## **V. Conclusion: Striking a Balance between Doctrinal Orthodoxy and Social Expectations**

Like other great philosophies and religions, Buddhism over the centuries has evolved in response to the imperatives of dogma as well as social requirements. For Buddhism to prosper, *bhikkhu*-s and the *saṅgha* need to offer practical, user-friendly ways for the converted to seek enlightenment; Buddhism also needs to fit in the norms of society at large. For example, in light of society’s gradual acceptance of the equality of the sexes -as well as the higher respect given to the handicapped - criteria for *Bodhisattahood* such as those contained in the *Atthadhamma* and the *Abhabbatthāna* can be interpreted as behind the times. As argued above, the simplification of the apprenticeship and training methods of the *Bodhisattva* in the Mahāyāna tradition - culminating in the Chan school’s total abolition of the *paramita* requirements - may be one reason for the stunningly fast growth of Buddhism in various Asian countries from the Fifth and Sixth Centuries CE.

As discussed, the concept of the *Bodhisatta* began to take on quasi-Mahāyānist hues in the commentarial and late-commentarial period of the Theravada tradition. More emphasis has been put on the imperative of a *Bodhisatta's* - or *sāvaka-bodhisatta's* commitment to doing good deeds and exercising *karuṇā* in this world. Dhammapala's retooling of the *pārami* schema has given a humanistic as well as humanitarian touch to the pursuit of bodhisattahood. While the exact extent to which authors of the great Pāli commentaries fell under the influence of Mahāyāna and other Indian traditions has yet to be determined, there seems little doubt that they made significant modifications to the Pāli tradition in response to the aspirations and practical needs of growing multitudes of Buddhist adherents. After all, apotheosis or self-glorification was never the intention of Gotama the Buddha. Buddha-s come to this world to relieve earthlings of *dukkha*. And insofar as both the *Bodhisatta* and *Bodhisattva* ideals put their emphasis on *karuṇā* and meritorious deeds, they dovetail well with the Tathāgata's teachings irrespective of the different theoretical and formalistic modifications that master preachers have made in order to skillfully meet the expectations of believers through the ages.

**End Note :**

1. For a discussion of the birth of Gotama the *Bodhisatta* and future Buddha, see, for example, Oldenberg 1992:72-94.
2. For a discussion of elements in the *Jātaka-s* that preach *karuṇā* and related qualities, see, for example, Dutt 1978:251-252.
3. For a discussion of the significance of Gotama receiving blessings from the Buddha Dipaṅkara, see, for example, Junko 2008: 52; also see Swearer 2004: 179-180.
4. Cited in Samuels 1997: Internet Edition, [http://www.hoavouu.corn/D\\_1-5\\_2-118\\_4-1851\\_5-15\\_6-2\\_17-37J4-2\\_15-2/](http://www.hoavouu.corn/D_1-5_2-118_4-1851_5-15_6-2_17-37J4-2_15-2/).
5. "dānaṃ sīlaṇca nekkhammaṃ, paññāṃvīriyaṇīca kīdisaṃ; khantisaccamadhiṭṭhānam, mettupekkhā ca kīdisā. (*Buddhavamsa* 1.76)
6. For an explication of the ten *parami*, see, for example, Naranda 1982: 29.
7. Cited in Acariya Dhammapala, *A Treatise on the Paramis: From the Commentary to the Cariyapitaka*, Translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi, Internet Edition, <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/authors/bodhi/wheel409.html>.
8. For a discussion of the three types of *bodhi*, see, for example, Kariyawasam: The Bodhisattva Concept.
9. Cited in Dhammapala, op.cit.
10. For a discussion of the *bodhicitta* concept, see Williams 2009: 194 -202.
11. Cited in Shantideva, *Bodhicharyāvatāra: The Way of the Bodhisattva* (Boston: Shambhala, 1997), Internet Edition, [http://www.shantideva.net/guide\\_ch1.htm](http://www.shantideva.net/guide_ch1.htm).

12. For a discussion of the centrality of *kariṇā* in the Bodhisattva ideal, see, for example, Keown 1996 : 86-88.
13. For a description of the special prowess of “lay Bodhisattva” Vimalakīrti, see, for example, Watson 1997: 32-36; 75-82.
14. For a discussion of the *pāramitā*-s, see, for example, Dayal 1999: 165-269.
15. For a discussion of the skilful means at the disposal of Vimalakīrti, the “lay” Bodhisattva, see, for example, Pye 2003: 83-100.
16. For a discussion of the ten *bhūmis*, see, for example, Harvey 1990: 122-124.
17. For a discussion of the “iconoclastic” approaches of Zen Buddhism, see, for example, Suzuki 1969.
18. Huineng’s renowned theory of self-attainment of Buddhahood is an elaboration of the teachings of Bodhidharma, the First Patriarch of Zen. Bodhidharma noted that “beyond this mind you’ll never find another Buddha.” See Pine 1987: 7.
19. McRae 2000: 33, 50.
20. McRae 2000: 46.
21. Cited in McRae 1986: 111.
22. J. McRae, *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*, p. 43.
23. Cited in Ch’en 1964: 362-363.
24. Cited in Walpole 1996: Internet Edition, <http://www.buddhanet.net/budas/ebud/ebdhal26.htm>.
25. Cited in Bodhi’s “Introduction” to Acariya Dhammapala, *A Treatise on the Pāramis: From the Commentary to the Cariyapitaka*, Translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi, <http://www.accesstosight.org/lib/authors/bodhi/wheel409.html>.
26. Cited in Keenan 2000: 97.
27. Ibid.
28. Cited in Bhikkhu Bodhi’s “Introduction” to Acariya Dhammapala, *A Treatise on the Pāramis: From the Commentary to the Cariyapitaka*, op. cit.

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## Buddhism in Kerala

Piyali Chakraborty

This history of Buddhism in South India is still wrapped in considerable obscurity. We have no means of knowing when and by what particular agency or means it got promulgated in this part of India." — so observes Dr. S. Krishnaswamy Iyengar, referring to the spread of Buddhism in South India. When there is so much of obscurity about the history of Buddhism in the South, one need not be surprised at the obscurity about the fortunes of Buddhism in Kerala in particular. In fact there are very few genuine evidences to show when and how Buddhism spread in Kerala. However, we shall attempt to place together the various evidences which we find scattered in ancient literature and inscriptions. One important point should be emphasised in this connection. Whatever might have been the age and agency for the spread of Buddhism in Kerala, these could not have been quite different from those of Tamilnadu. The bonds of ancient Kerala with her neighbouring Tamil regions were so strong that any religious or cultural movement which affected the latter was bound to have its reactions in Kerala. It would be puerile to argue that Kerala on the western side of the Sahya hills was unruffled by the changes in the religious life of her Tamil neighbours. Tamilakam in the ancient period was one cultural entity and no part of it could afford to stand aloof unaffected by the movements which swept the whole country. Buddhism was one such movement which enveloped the entire Tamilakam and it would not be wrong to conclude that it spread in Kerala more or less by the same means and at the same time as it did in the Chola and Pandya countries.

For examining how and to what extent Buddhism spread in Kerala during the centuries preceding the Christian era, the most helpful way would be to study the literature of the country during this period.

It is very significant that the important Tamil classics of the early period do not make any reference to the prevalence of Buddhism in the country. The Tolkappiyam the earliest grammatical work in Tamil which is generally assigned to the 4th century B. C. does not make even a side reference to Buddhism,<sup>2</sup> Similarly the Tirukkural of Tiruvalluvar which is assigned to a period two or three centuries later than the Tolkappiyam also makes no

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mention of Buddhism.<sup>3</sup> There are some scholars who interpret some terms and expressions of the Kural as pertaining to the creed of the Buddha. It is even claimed that Tiruvalluvar was a Buddhist by conviction. This conclusion is mainly drawn from the section entitled 'Turavu' the ten couplets commencing from the Kural Venba 341.<sup>4</sup> The substance of these ten Kurals is that renunciation is the cure for all ills and therefore one should aim at it. But one finds it difficult to understand how the concept of renunciation can be claimed to be exclusively a Buddhistic doctrine.

On the whole, there are few evidences to prove the wide prevalence of Buddhism in the South during this period. At least Buddhism had not become a potent factor influencing the life of the people at large. Perhaps stray members of the sect might have lived here and there in the capital cities of the Tamil kingdoms with no regular establishment or organisation. The absence of any reference to Buddhism in the literature of the country during this period-is not the only argument in support of this view. A more positive evidence may be given. There was an assemblage of eminent Buddhist divides, in Ceylon in the second century B. C. from various Buddhist centres on the occasion of the consecration of the Mahavihara in the reign of King Duttagamani Abaya. Invitations-were issued to all Buddhist centres of reputation. Monks who assembled for this ceremony included not only the "bhikkhu" of Ceylon, but also large numbers of others from the principal Viharas and monasteries of India.<sup>5</sup> The function was so very important that representatives from even 'Alasanda the city of the Yonas' came over to Ceylon to attend it. But in the list of places mentioned Kerala is not to be found. If Buddhism in Kerala had reached that degree of celebrity attained by the other centres certainly Buddhist divines from that country would have been invited to this function. The omission of Kerala indicates that Buddhism in Kerala had not reached any respectable degree of prominence. It may be suggested that the omission of Kerala indicates that Kerala Buddhism was something distinct — distinct to the point of hostility — from the Buddhism that prevailed in Northern India and Ceylon. But facts do not warrant such an inference. On the other hand we will be presently showing that there was close contact between South India and Ceylon during this period. In fact some Buddhist centres in South India were represented in this assembly at Ceylon. Banavasi in North Canara (Kannada) is one of the names mentioned. Another place mentioned is Pallavabhogga which may be identified with the Pallava country. If Buddhists from Banavasi and the Pallava country were not considered hostile, how can we say that those from

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Kerala alone were considered so. The obvious conclusion is that Buddhism in Kerala was not so prominent as that of the other centres mentioned in this list.

A relevant question which must be answered at this juncture is, how was Buddhism first introduced into the country. We have stated that Buddhism in Kerala was in its infant stages during the centuries preceding the Christian era. Nevertheless we have to explain how this religion was first introduced into this part of the country.

Some scholars are disposed to think that the propaganda for Buddhism in South India was not due to anything that Asoka did. South Indian Buddhism, they think, had little to do with Asoka's propaganda. They argue that if Buddhism had been introduced into this region by the efforts of Asoka's missionaries there would have been some reference to it in the literature of the country. But it is pointed out that even "the *Mani-mekalai* a professed Buddhist work written by a Buddhist author for the actual glorification of Buddhism referring to the more important Buddhist centres in Tamil India and to the monuments therein has not referred to Asoka in any one place."<sup>6</sup> It is a fact that there is absolutely no reference to Asoka in the *Manimekalai* while there are innumerable references to northern rulers and to northern saints. But the absence of any reference to Asoka in the *Manimekalai* cannot be accepted as a serious argument in support of the contention that South Indian Buddhism had nothing to do with Asoka. It must be remembered that the *Manimekalai* was composed many centuries after Asoka's time. There is no occasion in the epic to refer to the history of the spread of Buddhism in the country and therefore the absence of any reference to Asoka need not be very surprising. The statement that South Indian traditions do not give any evidence of any connection with Asoka<sup>7</sup> does not seem to be wholly acceptable. Mention must be made here of the traditions about Asoka referred to by the Chinese Traveller Yuan Chwang when he gives his account of "Malakuta". He speaks of the remains of an old monastery built by Asoka's brother Mahendra on the east side of the capital and the tope built by Asoka to perpetuate the memory of the Buddha. It is needless to say that the monastery and the tope to which the pilgrim makes reference were only fictitious and legendary, but it must be remembered that the pilgrim would not have spoken of these with great show of accuracy if there had been absolutely no traditions connecting the name of Asoka or Mahendra with the country.

It may be argued that Kerala or any of the South Indian kingdoms is not mentioned in the list of places to which Asoka sent missionaries and there-

fore the introduction of Buddhism in these places could not have been by Asoka's agents. According to Buddhist traditions various missions were sent to distant countries for the propagation of Buddhism as a result of a council held under the auspices of Asoka. The Mahā Vamsa gives the list of these places with the names of the "theras" sent to them respectively.<sup>8</sup> In fact in this list of places the southernmost region mentioned is "Vanavasa" (the Banavasi country). The only other possibility of a South Indian kingdom is Mahishamandala which may be identified with Mysore.<sup>9</sup> But here again, the absence of any mention of South Indian kingdoms in this list cannot be taken by itself to be a sound argument in support of the theory that Buddhism was introduced into these regions by agencies other than those of Asoka. We shall now examine the famous edicts of Asoka and see what light they throw on this problem. There is only one Asokan edict which makes a direct reference to Kerala and that is Rock Edict No. II. It says :

"Everywhere within the dominion of His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King and likewise among the frontages such as the Cholas, Pandyas, the Satiyaputra, the Keralaputra, what is (known as) Tamraparni, the Greek King Antiochus and those kings too who are the neighbours of that Antiochus everywhere have been instituted by His Sacred and Gracious Majesty two kinds of medical treatment — medical treatment of man and medical treatment of beast. Medicinal herbs also, those wholesome for man and wholesome for beast have been caused to be imported and to be planted in all places wherever they did not exist. Roots also have been caused to be imported and to be planted everywhere wherever they did not exist. On the roads wells also have been caused to be dug and trees caused to be planted for the enjoyment of man and beast".<sup>10</sup>

Six copies of this edict have been discovered at different places in India. They are Girnar in the Junagarh state (Kathiawar Peninsula), Kalsi a town in the Dehra Dun district (U. P.), Shabazgarhi a village in the Peshawar district (N.W. F.P.) Mansehra in the Hazara district (NW.E. P.) Dhauli a village in the Puri district (Orissa) and Jaugada in the Ganjam district (Madras). But in the Dhauli and Jaugada edicts the words referring to Kerala are worn out. In the other four copies we find notable differences in the usage of the term referring to Kerala. In the Girnar edict<sup>11</sup> the term :

used is 'Ketalaputo, in the Kalsi edict<sup>12</sup> it is Kelalaputo, in the Shabazgarhi edict<sup>13</sup> it is Keradaputro', and in the Mansehra edict<sup>14</sup> it is Keralaputra. But ordinarily in the translations of this edict the term is simply put down as 'Keralaputra'. Kerala is mentioned in this edict as one of the realms

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neighbouring to Asoka's empire where the king instituted hospitals for men and beasts. Providing comforts for men and animals, planting trees on way sides, digging wells and other such things mentioned in this edict were important items on the programme of Buddhistic propaganda which the king systematically pursued. This edict clearly proves that Kerala had come under the influence of the Buddhistic propaganda of Asoka. It is very significant that all the kingdoms mentioned in Rock Edict II with the exception of "Satiyaputra and Keralaputra" are mentioned in the famous Rock Edict—<sup>15</sup> XIII Where the names of kingdoms, where the Dharma prevailed are given. These kingdoms were no doubt beyond the direct political influence of the great Buddhist emperor. All scholars agree that the Magadha empire stopped short north of the Tamil country. But this does not necessarily imply that Buddhism stopped there. Asoka's edicts make special mention of the independent kingdoms of South India as being under the influence of Buddhistic propaganda and doctrines. A careful examination of Rock Edict XIII will throw much light on this point. The edict says: "..... Indeed His Sacred Majesty desires towards all living beings freedom from harm, restraint of passions, impartiality and cheerfulness. And what is Dharma vijaya, moral conquest, is considered by his Sacred Majesty the principal conquest. And this has been repeatedly won by His Sacred Majesty both here (in - his dominions) and among all the frontier peoples even to the extent of six hundred Yojanas where (are) the "Yona King, Antiochus by name and beyond that Antiochus the four kings named Ptolemy, Antigonas, Magas and Alexander; below the Cholas, Pandyas as far as Tamraparni. Likewise here in the king's dominion among the Yonas and Kambojas among the Nabhakas and Nabhitis (Nabhapantis) and Pitinikas, among the Andhras and Palindas, everywhere are people following the religious injunction of His Sacred Majesty."<sup>16</sup>

It can be argued that in this edict there is no mention of Kerala and therefore Buddhism did not prevail in this country. But a careful examination of this edict will convince us that Kerala was not ignored in the edict. When the edict refers to the southern kingdoms it says, the Cholas, Pandyas as far as Tamraparni-

The expression 'as far as' is very significant to our study. Unfortunately Mr. Vincent Smith has overlooked this point. His translation of this passage reads: "And this is the chiefest conquest in His Majesty's opinion—the conquest by the Law of Piety; this also is that effected by His Majesty both in his own dominions and in all the neighbouring realms as far as six hundred

leagues—even to where the Greek King named Antiochus dwells, and beyond that Antiochus to where dwell the four kings severally named Ptolemy, 'Antigonus, Magas and Alexander—and in the South the kings of the Cholas and Pandyas and of Ceylon....."<sup>17</sup> If we accept Mr. Smith's translation, we have to concede that Kerala is not mentioned in the edict because the edict refers to the "Kings of the Cholas and Pandyas and of Ceylon" and not "to the Cholas and Pandyas as far as Tamraparni or Ceylon." In the translations of Dr. Hultzsch<sup>18</sup> and Mr. Bhandarkar,<sup>19</sup> however, we find reference to the South Indian kingdoms 'as far as' Ceylon. The pali text speaks of Choda-Pamda ava Ta (m) bapam (ni) ya' and its translation should be "Cholas, Pandyas as far as Tamraparni."<sup>20</sup> This can legitimately be interpreted, to include the Kerala kingdom also. Even otherwise, the absence of a special mention of Kerala need not be taken seriously. When Kerala is mentioned in Rock Edict II along with its neighbouring Tamil kingdoms as a place where Asoka did Buddhistic propaganda, the failure to make a special mention of Kerala in Rock Edict XIII may be considered to be quite casual. It is difficult to argue that Kerala was selected only for the institution of hospitals for men and beasts and that Buddhism had not been introduced there, while it was introduced in the other regions of Tamilakam. In the light of what we have stated above it can be safely concluded that Buddhism had been introduced into Kerala and the Southern Tamil Kingdoms during the time of Asoka.

There is no sufficient ground to argue that Buddhism in Kerala was pre-Asokan. In fact what we gather from Rock Edict<sup>13</sup> is that the religion was introduced into Kerala and the southern kingdoms by Asoka. Rock Edict 13 says that Dharmavijaya has been repeatedly won by His Sacred Majesty both in his dominions and among the frontier peoples, among whom are mentioned the Tamil peoples. The edict clearly says that the conquest of Dharina was effected in these dominions by the king, ("...the conquest by the Law of Piety; this also is that effected by His Majesty in his own dominions and in all the neighbouring realms.....") The statements in Rock Edict II confirm this view.

There is a very good possibility for the spread of Buddhism in Kerala and the Tamil countries by Ceylonese missionaries. Our evidence in support of this view is mainly drawn from some ancient inscriptions and monuments of the Pandya country which are assigned to the third century B. C. But what we infer from these inscriptions is that Ceylonese missionaries must have come to the Tamil countries only after Asoka had commenced his Buddhistic propaganda in the South.<sup>21</sup>



The monuments we are referring to are the mountain caverns known as 'Pancha pandava malai' which according to scholars are "the oldest that the Pandya country contains—or for the matter of fact the oldest in Southern India."<sup>22</sup> All scholars agree that they were undoubtedly the abodes of Buddhist monks in the third century B. C.<sup>23</sup> Also there are ample evidences to establish their connection with Ceylon. The general shape of these caverns and all details of their formation show a very close resemblance to the Buddhist caverns of Ceylon. Also the script of the inscriptions on the rocks resembles in many respects the character of the Ceylon cave records of the same period. Further there is literary evidence to substantiate this view. The *Mahā Vamsa* speaks of the missionary activities of Ceylonese monks, abroad. It says: "The five principal 'theras' who had accompanied Mahinda from Jambudipa as well as those of whom Aritta was the principal and in like manner the thousands of sanctified priests, all natives of Lanka and inclusive of Sanghamitta the twelve theras who came from Jambudipa and many thousands of pious priestesses all natives of Lanka, all these profoundly learned, and infinitely wise personages having spread abroad the light of the Vinaya and other branches of faith in due course of nature at subsequent periods submitted to the lot of mortality." The first countries that the missionaries from Ceylon could have visited are, the Tamil countries, of the south. In some of the inscriptions to which we have referred there is specific mention of "Ila" which means pertaining to Ceylon.<sup>24</sup> Many Buddhist monuments have been discovered on the high range of hills called kalugumalai near Arittapatti. It is suggested that Arittapatti (the village of Aritta) in the Pandya country was the settlement of the Singhalese Apostle Aritta of the third century B.C.<sup>25</sup> . All these evidences clearly prove the influence of Ceylonese missionaries in the Tamil countries. These inscriptions and monuments are assigned by scholars to a period mostly after the eighteenth year of the reign of Asoka,<sup>26</sup> i.e. after Asoka had commenced his missionary activities in the south which are described in Rock Edict- II and Rock Edict - XIII.

We do not have any definite evidence to prove that Ceylonese missionaries had spread their religion in Chera Nadu. But it would not be wrong to conclude that they had not excluded the Chera country from the sphere of their missionary activities, when we take into account the contiguity of the Pandya and Chera countries and the fundamental unity of ancient Tamilakam. Perhaps the Ceylonese monks must have concentrated their activities in the Pandya regions. It is quite possible that missionaries from these regions must

have spread into the Chera territory.<sup>27</sup> However we have sufficient evidence to prove that Buddhism had spread into Kerala during this period.

### Foot note :

1. Article entitled "Buddhism in Manimekalai" in "Buddhistic studies" (B.C. Law) Page 1.
2. The Tolkappiyam whose author was known as Tolkappiyar was the Grammatical basis of the literary works of the second and third Academies (Sangams) It is divided into three books dealing respectively with phonology with accidence and syntax and with war and love, prosody etc. The first two parts are instructive from the linguistic and the philological points of view as revealing the conditions of the Tamil language at the time while the third section gives us glimpses of the political, social and religious life of the people. The work has been commented upon by several notable commentators like-Ilampuranar, Naccinarkiniyar and Senavaraayar.
3. The date of the Kural is a disputed point. Some scholars even assign it to the early centuries of the Christian era. But it is generally accepted to be a work of the pre-Christian era.
4. The Kural is popularly known as Muppai (literally Trivarga) and deals with the three objects of life Dharma, Artha and Kama ; the fourth Moksha does not lend itself to didactic treatment and has been indicated in the last section on Dharma. The work consists of 133 chapters each containing ten Kural Venbas or couplets. Dharma has been treated in all the four stages, viz., of student, householder, a retired life and that of the hermit. It is supplemented with a chapter on predestination. The attempts of some writers to find Buddhistic principles in these chapters -are quite unwarranted. The treatment of Dharma in the Kural is certainly not from the Buddhistic point of view.
5. The following are the names of some of the notable Buddhist divines who were present on that occasion (History of the Sinhalese—J. M. Senavartana Vbl; II P 16.)  
 Candagutta Maha Thera.—From the Vanavasa country (Modern Banavasi in Canara)  
 Cittagutta Maha Thera—From the Bodhimanda Vihara at Bodhgaya the place where Gautama attained to Buddhahood)  
 Dharma Sena Maha Thera — From Isipatanarama (near Baranasi the modern Benares—where the Buddha preached his first sermon).  
 Indagutta Maha Thera. — From Rajagaha (now Rajgir) the capital of Magadha.  
 Mahadeva Maha Thera — From Pallavabhogga.  
 Mittinna Maha Thera.—From the Asokarama in Pupphapura (Pataliputra).  
 Piyadassi Maha Thera — From the Jatavanarama (a monastery near Savatthi in the Kosala country).  
 Suryagutta - Maha Thera—From Kelasa Vihara.  
 Urudhamma — Rakkhita Maha Thera — From the Gositarama in Kosambi (on the River Jamuna).

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Urusamgha —Rakkhita Maha Thera—From the Dakkhinagiri in Ujjeni (now Ujjain in the Gwalior State, Central India).

Uttara Maha Thera—From the Vattaniyarama in the Vinjha forest (near the Vindhya mountain.)

Uttina Maha Thera—From the Kasmira country.

Yonamahadhamma — Rakkhita Maha. Thera — From Alasanda (Alexandria) the city of the Yonas. i.e., Greeks.

6. Dr S. K. Iyengar's article on "Buddhism in Manimekalai" in Buddhist studies by B.C. Law, Page 1.
7. Ibid.
8. Mahā Vamsa (Geiger's translation, Chapter XII, P. 82)—"When the therā Moggaliputta the illuminator of the religion of the conqueror had brought the (third) council to an end and when looking into the future he had beheld the founding of the religion in adjacent countries (then) in the month of Kattika he sent forth theras one here and one there. The theras Majjhantika he sent to Kasmira and Gandhara, the therā Mahadeva he sent to Mahisha-mandala, To Vanavasa he sent the therā named Rakkhita and to Aparantaka the yonā named Dammarakkhitato ; Maharattha (he sent) the therā named Mahadamnia Rakkhita, but the therā Maharakhita he sent into the country of Yonā. He sent the therā Majjhima to the Himalaya country and to Suvannabhumi he sent the two theras Sona and Uttara. The great therā Mahinda the theras Itthiya, Uttiya, Sambala and Bhaddasala his disciples, these five theras he sent forth with the charge. "Ye shall found in the lovely island of Lanka the lovely religion of the conqueror".
9. 'Beginnings of South Indian History', by Dr. S. K. Iyengar. PP. 74-77.
10. Dr. Mukkerji's translation. see 'Asoka' by Mukkerji, PP. 131-132
11. The Inscriptions of Asoka, Hultzsch P. P. 2-3
12. Ibid PP. 28—29,
13. Ibid P. 51.
14. Ibid P. 72.
15. I came across, a very curious interpretation about these variations in the terms referring to Kerala in the Keralacharitham a Malayalam work by Mr. Attoor Krishna Pisharadi a reputed Malayalam scholar. According to him the different copies of the edict must have been instituted at different periods with intervals of nearly two centuries between them. Keralaputra, he says, is reference to Keralaputranmar or Raksha purushanmar, the Protectors who are supposed to have ruled Kerala in ancient times. Later Kerala came under the rule of a single monarch and this accounts for the reference to Kerala as Keralaputo. With due respect to the scholarship of Mr. Pisharadi it must be pointed out that his explanation is very fantastic. There would have been some interval between the institution of one copy and another. But the interval could not have been two centuries. Even if we presume that there was such a long interval and that the changes he refers to in the administration of Kerala had taken place during this interval it would be absurd to argue that these changes were scrupulously noticed by those who instituted these

edicts. In that case they ought to have taken cognizance of the changes in the governments of the other kingdoms also.

16. Mukherji's translation 'Asoka' – PP. 162 – 170
17. 'Asoka', V, Smith PP. 131-132.
18. 'Inscriptions of Asoka', Hultzsch P.48
19. 'Asoka' , E.G. Bhandarkar. P. 302.
20. In the Girnar Rock edict the portions relating to these kingdoms are worn not. In the Kalsi edict the reference is to "Choda Pamdiya Avain Tambapamniya" (Inscriptions of Asoka, Hultzsch P P 43-46) In the Shahbazgarshi edict the reference is to choda. Pamda are Ta [m] bapam [ni]ya." (Ibid PP. 66-68). In the Mansehra edict the reference is to Choda – Pamdiya a Tambapa [ni]niya (Ibid PP. 81-83).
21. Mr K. V. Subramaniya Iyer (Archaeologist to the Madras Government) in an article on the Origin and decline of Buddhism in South India in the I A. Vol. XL says that Buddhism could not have been unknown in the Pandya country long before Asoka. It is based on the assumptions that Buddhism was introduced into Ceylon by Vijaya and his followers as early as the 5th century B. C. and that there was regular contact between South India and Ceylon during this period. The latter proposition may be true, but as the former view is found to be untenable, this conclusion cannot be accepted. Vide, I. A. Vol. XL. PP. 209-210 Proceedings of The oriental Conference. Indian Antiquary (I.A.).
22. For a critical study of these monuments see article entitled " The earliest monuments of the Pandya country and their inscriptions by. Mr. K. V. Subramaniya Iyer in the Pr. O. C. Proceeding of the Oriental Conference 3rd session, PP. 275—300. For a complete description of these monuments reference may be made to Mr. Venkayya's remarks on them in the Annual Report on Epigraphy, for 1908.
23. "These monuments are popularly called 'Pancha pandava malai' a name which strongly reminds us of the Pandava Pabbata at whose foot the. Buddha after his renunciation took his first meal which he had obtained by begging, and this fact suggests that these caves might have been the favourite resorts of Buddha bhiksus who probably had their abode in them as the name " Undankal" (the rock of one who took meals) applied to one of them indicates and should have been called Pandavamalai after the name of the monument where the Great One whom they followed in every way first resided. In this connection it is also worthy of note that some of these hills are termed 'Kalugumalai ' a Tamil rendering of the Sanskrit Gradhrakutta the hill occupied by the Buddha during his ascetic life." Pr. O. C. 3rd session PP. 278—279.
24. Pr. O. C. 3rd session, P.P. 289-292 (Proceedings of the Oriental Conference)
25. LA. Vol. XL- P.211 ( Indian Antiquary)
26. Ibid.
27. In this connection mention may be made of the reference in the Manimekalai to the visit of the Dharmacharanas from Lanka to the Chera Country when the ninth ancestor of Kovalan and the Chera ruler received them with due respect and the former built a Chaitya in the Chera capital.

# Our Vampires, Their Vampires: A Study of the Origin of Vampire Legend in Buddhist Mythology

Subham Amin

All we have to go upon are traditions and superstitions.... For, let me tell you, he (Vampire) is known everywhere that men have been. In old Greece, in old Rome; he flourish in Germany all over, in France, in India, even in the Chersonese; and in China, so far from us in all ways, there even is he, and the peoples fear him at this day.<sup>1</sup>

In his discourse on the origin and nature of the vampire Count Dracula in Bram Stoker's epoch-making novel *Dracula*, Dr. Van Helsing, the enlightened doctor-scientist as well as exorcist traces the existence of vampiric creatures in every civilization since the ancient age. Such observation holds metaphoric significance as it suggests the existence of such un-dead in the theological as well as cultural discourses of all the major civilizations. Although, the myth of vampire finds different dimensions and manifestations in different cultures, they share the characteristic feature of the subversion of the norms of heteronormativity on the one hand, and the state of transition between life and death on the other. The ancient predecessors of 'the vampire' comprise the Grecian legends of Empusae and Lamia, the bloodsucking seductresses, Indian Baital, the animated corpse or Pishacha and the vampires of Slavic folklore.

The Hindu and Buddhist mythologies have rich traditions of demonology as well. The supernatural creatures such as Rakshasa, Pishacha, Danava, Dakini, Yogini, and Pretini have been presented in theological as well as fictional discourses with their characteristic details. Such demonic creatures have often been designated as the consorts of the Lord Shiva and often they have been conceived as the companions of the Goddess Kali. There are schools of Tantra that valorize and promote the power of the demons to control natural and human world. Tantra, unlike the Brahminical texts, conceives male as passive and female as active in sexual union. The problematisation of heteronormative codes of sexuality in Tantra perhaps stems from Vajrayana Buddhist tradition which places goddesses as prominent entities rather than mere companions of their male counterparts. The demons also problematizes heteronormativity by transgressing the established norms of sexuality anticipating the western vampiric creatures in the nineteenth century.

A study of the myth of vampire in the west renders its striking similarities with the Gods and Goddesses of Buddhism of Vajrayana tradition. The concepts of Hell and the Lord of Death in Buddhist mythology appear to render structural resemblance with the western concept of vampire and his abode conceived

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in fictional narratives. The description of hell in Jatakas renders a filthy nether world similar to the dwelling abode of the vampires :

The commentary on the Matakabhata Jataka refers to the sixteen *ussadanirayas*.... There is in the hell a lake filled with stinking filth and ordure. Its inhabitants have to eat ordure and filth. Malicious persons who harm their friends and hurt others are subject to such suffering.

Another stinking lake full of blood and pus is also there. Those who slay their fathers, mothers and others to whom they should pay reverence are cast into it and have to drink a draught of blood.<sup>2</sup>

In Jataka, there is a description of the hell *Sataporisa* that is also endowed with similar attributes :

Those who slay their mothers are sent to this hell and are cut with ploughshares by demons. When they become thirsty, the demons give them blood resembling molten copper which flows from their wounds. Here they suffer from loss of sight. Enormous worms pierce the sinners' skin and devour their flesh and blood.<sup>3</sup>

Such a description of harrowing hell with a lake full of blood to quench the thirst of the sinners in Buddhist mythology the motif of the vampire legend: blood. Dracula feeds on the blood of his victims to retain eternal life, thereby to remain in the state of eternal damnation. As Van Helsing gathers from the ancient scriptures :

The vampire live on, and cannot die by mere passing of the time; he can flourish when that he can fatten on the blood of the living. Even more, we have seen amongst us that he can even grow younger; that his vital faculties grow strenuous, and seem as though they refresh themselves when his special pabulum is plenty.... But he cannot flourish without his diet; he eat not as others.<sup>4</sup>

It is significant to note that such hells in Jatakas are reserved for those who commit blasphemy or sacrilege. Dracula's act of renunciation of God and his bloodsucking motive that resembles *fellatio*, approximate sacrilege by virtue of his defiance of heteronormative codes of sexuality endorsed in theological doctrines. Ironically, the blood which the sinners are compelled to consume as part of their torment in hell in Buddhist mythology, Dracula appropriated the motif as the elixir of eternal life. The appropriation renders a subversive form of counter discourse against the ecclesiastical order.

*Suttanipata*, in its description of the tortures in hell, refers to the victims who are struck with iron rods; they are led to the iron stake with sharp edges.<sup>5</sup> It may not be coincidental that Dracula is supposed to be killed with an iron stake pierced through his heart. As Van Helsing recounts :

The branch of wild rose on his coffin keep him that he move not from it; a sacred bullet fired into the coffin kill him so that he be true dead; and as for the stake through him, we know already of its peace; or the cut-off head that giveth rest. We have seen it with our eyes.<sup>6</sup>

It is ironical that the vampire who demonstrates subversion of heteronormativity in its sexual practices, has been punished with a stake, a

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twisted phallic symbol in order to penetrate his body. In his penetrative study of the exorcism of vampiric corpse of Lucy, Christopher Craft has observed :

This enthusiastic correction of Lucy's monstrosity provides the Crew of Light with a double reassurance: it effectively exorcises the threat of a mobile and hungering feminine sexuality, and it counters the homoeroticism latent in the vampiric threat by reinscribing (upon Lucy's chest) the line dividing the male who penetrates and the woman who receives. By disciplining Lucy and restoring each gender to its 'proper' function, Van Helsing's pacification programme compensates for the threat of gender indefiniteness implicit in the vampiric kiss.<sup>7</sup>

Therefore, stake, the most effective and potent phallic weapon of patriarchy has been employed to discipline the sinners who have committed sacrilege in the hell of Jataka, has also emerged in vampire narratives to discipline the transgressive male and female vampires. As Christopher Craft has observed :

The vigour and enormity of this penetration (Arthur driving the 'round wooden stake', which is 'some two and a half or three inches thick and about three feet long', resembles 'the figure of Thor') do not bespeak merely Stoker's personal or idiosyncratic anxiety but suggest as well a whole culture's uncertainty about the fluidity of gender roles.<sup>8</sup>

The demi-gods and goddesses in Tibetan Vajrayana pantheon, precisely those of wrath manifest their preoccupation with blood drinking, the central metaphor in vampiric fiction. In Tibetan Book of the Dead, one would find plenty of such deities. In the description of the Judgement Day after death, the furies of the Lord of Death is being presented as a demonic figure, preoccupied with blood :

Then [one of the Executive Furies of] the Lord of Death will place round thy neck a rope and drag thee along; he will cut off thy head, extract thy heart, pull out thy intestines, lick up thy brain, drink thy blood, eat thy flesh and gnaw thy bones; but thou wilt be incapable of dying. Although thy body be hacked to pieces, it will revive again. The repeated hacking will cause intense pain and torture.<sup>9</sup>

The series of macabre images of the disintegration of body with a beastly vigour and monstrous violence gets replicated in the description of vampiric Lucy in *Dracula*:

Never did I see such baffled malice on a face.... The beautiful colour became livid, the eyes seemed to throw out sparks of hell-fire, the brows were wrinkled as though the folds of the flesh were the coils of Medusa's snakes, and the lovely, blood-stained mouth grew to an open square, as in the passion masks of the Greeks and Japanese. If ever a face meant death-if looks could kill- we saw it at that moment.<sup>10</sup>

In his introduction of the Tibetan Book of the Dead, C.G. Jung considers the image of the torment after death as equivalent to schizophrenia. As he ob-

serves :

The psychological equivalent of this dismemberment is psychic dissociation. In its deleterious form it would be schizophrenia (split mind). This most common of all mental illnesses consists essentially in a marked *abaissement du niveau mental* which abolishes the normal checks imposed by the conscious mind and thus gives unlimited scope to the play of the unconscious 'dominants'.<sup>11</sup>

Similarly, the monstrous violence performed by vampires represents the free play of the unconscious as a result of claustrophobic censorship of Victorian England. The myth of vampire emerged in the form of licentious and sacrilegious Dracula engaged in all forms of inverted and forbidden sexuality: homosexuality, lesbianism, incest, necrophilia and subverts the heteronormative codes of sexuality. Thus, Vampiric sexuality becomes emblematic of libidinal excess and liberation of the unconscious. Yet there remains the fear of being ostracized for uninhibited sexuality has always been vulnerable to the threats of punishment. Thus, the celebration of the unconscious has been feared by the ego. In his commentaries on the torture of the Hell in Tibetan Book of the Dead, Jung observes :

The transition...from the Sidpa state to the Chonyid state is the dangerous reversal of the aims and intentions of the conscious mind. It is a sacrifice of the ego's stability and a surrender to the extreme uncertainty of what must seem like a chaotic riot of phantasmal forms.... Fear of self-sacrifice lurks deep in every ego, and this fear is often only the precariously controlled demand of the unconscious forces to burst out in full strength.<sup>12</sup>

The Tibetan necromancy and Western vampirism seem to have emanated from the unconscious that poses a threat to dismantle the structured form of heteronormative paradigm of sexuality nurtured by the ego. Their contestation of heteronormativity resists the onslaught of patriarchy. The tradition of Tantra originated in Buddhist Vajrayana tradition valorizes the cult of the feminine, where Shakti, the female Goddess seems to represent force of active dynamism and Shiva, the male God represents stasis and passive reception. The problematisation of heteronormative codes of sexuality in Tantra perhaps stems from Vajrayana Buddhist tradition which places goddesses as prominent entities rather than mere companions of their male counterparts. The female deities of Vajrayana Buddhism represent energy and the force of destruction to render the dialectical relationship between order and disorder, creation and destruction. They represent the violent and impulsive Nature as a counterpart of static and passive culture. It is significant to note, that Dracula has the power to control the natural forces. As Van Helsing recounts :

(He) can, within his range, direct the elements: the storm, the fog, the thunder; he can command all the meaner things: the rat, and the owl, and the bat—the moth, and the fox, and the wolf; he can grow and become small; and he can at times vanish and come unknown.<sup>13</sup>

In short, Dracula represents the elemental forces of Nature, subversive



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and hence disruptive of the ordered form of the 'civilized' society dominated by patriarchal values. The Victorian England observed the emphatic domination of heteronormative culture associated with patriarchal codes. As Michel Foucault has observed :

Sexuality was carefully confined; it moved into the home. The conjugal family took custody of it and absorbed it into the serious function of reproduction. On the subject of sex, silence became the rule. The couple imposed itself as model, enforced the norm, safeguarded the truth, and reserved the right to speak while returning the principle of secrecy. A single locus of sexuality was acknowledged in social space as well as the heart of every household, but it was a utilitarian and fertile one: the parents' bedroom.<sup>14</sup>

Dracula powerfully subverts the disciplined structure by successfully disrupting the quiet London scene. The transformation of Lucy into a voluptuous female monster threatens to disrupt the foundation of patriarchal social structure: family. Her demonstration of uninhibited sexuality and her endeavour to engage multiple men in a sexual orgy with her, poses a serious intimidation before the Victorian conservatism. Lucy had to be defeated, assaulted and brutalized in order to retain the patriarchal order. The victory of the 'Crew of Light' over the dark Dracula represents the triumph of Western patriarchy over the Eastern cult of the feminine, a legacy of Vajrayana Buddhism.

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# Nāgārjuna : The Myriad-Minded Man

**Sumanapal Bhikkhu (Subhasis Barua)**

The Tibetan and East Asian Mahāyāna traditions of Buddhism often referred Nāgārjuna as “the second Buddha”. He offered sharp criticism of Brāhmaṇic and Buddhist essentialist philosophy, theory of knowledge, and approaches to practice. Nāgārjuna's philosophical occupies a very critical position not only in the corpus of Indian philosophy but also in the whole tradition of philosophical thought as it reaches some important question regarding some of our assumptions made in our attempt to understand the world. In this context we may mention many important topics such as the existence of stable substance, the linear and one directional movement of causation, the atomic individuality of persons and the belief in a fixed life.

Nāgārjuna's famous concept of emptiness (Śūnyatā) does not mean “non existence” as it is sometimes traditionally believed but a lack of, inherently essential existence (nisavabhāva). However, Nāgārjuna emphasized that the denial of autonomy does not take us to the world of metaphysical or existential predilection. On the contrary, it demonstrates that all things are interconnected and this includes human beings. What Nāgārjuna tried to establish was the fact that all things are empty. This hints at the concept that all phenomena are incessantly changing and they do not have any fixed nature.

This served as an instrument of subsequent Buddhist philosophy opposed to Vedic system. The philosophy of Nāgārjuna had a great significance for Indian philosophical models of equation, substance, and epistemology, conceptualizations of language, ethics and theories of liberation solution.

**Nāgārjunas Life, Legend and Works :** We have very little authentic about the personal life of Nāgārjuna. Nāgārjuna has two very detailed biographies— one in Chinese and the other in Tibetan, and both of them were written many centuries after his demise. As a result, they abound in unrealistic though interesting material. However, by judiciously applying the mythical elements and combining with them those test which we may attribute to him safely, we may develop a general idea about his place in the Indian Buddhist or philosophical tradition.

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## Nāgārjuna : The Myriad Minded Man

Nāgārjuna is believed to have been born in a “Hindu” family or in an upper class Buddhist family somewhere in the Andhra region of South India. Since he was a Hindu we may take it for granted that they had deep regard for the Vedas. Though we do not know for certain the dates of his life, we may use the two tests written by him to give us some help in this regard. The texts were compressed in the forms of epistles that were addressed to Gautamiputra Satkarni who was the historical King of the northern Satvahana dynasty. In spite of Nāgārjuna's advice the King was steadfast in his patronage of Brahmanism and in making quarrels was against powerful northern shaka satrap rulers. He also made attempts at expansion which ultimately proved unsuccessful. In sum, the evidences that can be attained from these imperial epistles shows that the significant events of Nāgārjuna's life took place somewhere between the period from 150 and 200 CE.<sup>1</sup> From this we may assume the accounts of the Tibetan source as a curate and these sources portray the philosopher's emigration to the University of Nalanda in present day Bihar in order to study Buddhism. Perhaps the Shaka rulers themselves followed the same path of emigration to the north. We cannot say for certain how and why Nāgārjuna was converted to Buddhism. The Tibetan account shares that own up to the prediction that Nāgārjuna would die a premature death, his parents very promptly converted him to Buddhism.

Nāgārjuna, as a young adolescent, who, using his magical power, entered the King's harem with some friends and tried to seduce his mistresses. In the attempt they were caught red handed and ultimately executed. Only Nāgārjuna managed to escape. However, the incident made him realize that the pursuit of desire was dangerous and as a result Nāgārjuna decided to seek Enlightenment by renouncing the world. After his conversion, he received invitations from the serpent Kingdom due to his skill at meditation and magic. So he went to the bottom of the ocean and it is claimed that there he “discovered” the wisdom literature of the “Buddhist tradition” which is known as the “Prajñāparamita sūtra.” He returned to the world with them and after that he came to be famous as Nāgārjuna. In those days many interesting events took place in the realm of knowledge and learning. Though traditionally it is believed that the debate between the classical Theravāda and emerging Mahāyāna (Great Vehicle) got the inspiration from Nāgārjuna's creativity but we find very rare evidence regardship the topic in Sanskrit, the language in which Nāgārjuna wrote. It is much more possible that Nāgārjuna was more encouraged by the ongoing philosophy debates between Buddhist and Brahmanical Philosophers that were happening throughout North India.

Various Indian philosophical schools such as Vaiśeṣika and Yoga were well-established in the philosophical sense and the new Vedic school of Logic (Nyaya) was on the rise. Nāgārjuna took part in these movements and it was an intellectual effort that had no precedence's until that part of time. The concept of "Sunya" meant in the early Pali Buddhist literature the lack of a stable, inherent existence in person but from the third century BCE onwards the word "Śūnya" also began to denote the number "Zero" which was newly formulated. The concept of "Śūnya" was the interpretative key by which all the contemporary philosophical schools were undone. Nāgārjuna made a bold attempt to correct all those philosophies that believed in the existences of fixed substances and essences. Nāgārjuna believed that things have no fixed nature since they have no essence and in the absence of anything essential or immutable the notion of change as well as the transformation of one thing into another are possible. The absence of inherent and eternal essence enables each thing to exist. With these concepts of "emptiness" and, "Zeroes" Nāgārjuna brought about a perpetual change in the vocabulary and nature of Buddhist philosophy.

Nāgārjuna's literary corpus was based on the concept of the 'emptiness of all things'. There are differences of opinion as to which of the texts claimed to be written by Nāgārjuna can be safely attributed to him.

However, scholars seem to have reached a general agreement. As the exact chronological order of Nāgārjuna's works were written is shrouded in mystery, they can at the most be arranged in theoretical order namely works on Buddhist topics, Brahmanical topics and finally ethics. Nāgārjuna addressed the schools of Buddhism that he considered metaphysically wayward in his *Fundamental Verses in the Middle way* "Mūlamādhymikārikā" and it was followed by "the Seventy Verses on Emptiness (Śūnyatāsaptati)" that was an advancement of his newly coined and revolutionary concept. This book was followed by a treatise on Buddhist philosophical method. "The Sixty Verses on Reasoning (Yuktiṣaṣṭika)" He also wrote a didactic work "The Constituents of Dependants Arising" and also a pair of religious or ethical treatise which bore the title to be Good Friend (Suhṛulekha)" and previous Garland (Ratnavālī). As an active author Nāgārjuna dealt with the most relevant contemporary philosophical issues related to Buddhism and Brahmanism and not only that, he extended his Buddhist concepts in the realm of political, social and ethical issues.

Nāgārjuna's life span is also unknown; the legendary story associated with his death pays him a tribute in the Buddhist tradition. From the Tibetan

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life rapiers we come to know that as the successor of Gouatamiputra Satkarni<sup>2</sup> was about to ascend the throne. He wanted to replace Nāgārjuna who was the spiritual advisor to the king by some other person with a strong Brahmanical learning. He had no idea how to approach the great sage Nāgārjuna delicately and diplomatically and as a result of it he directly requested him to be accommodative and compassionate to his problem and comment. Nagarjuna obliged the new king.

**Nāgārjuna's vast activities :** We already know that Nāgārjuna was born in south India and converted to Buddhism. From one of his biographies we come to know that an astrologer made a prediction that he would live for seven years. Whereas the span of seven years age almost expired his parents entrusted him to a servant and sent him away on a pilgrim because they wanted to avoid seeing the death of his son. But after reaching Nalanda University he was informed by Saraha that he could still remain alive if he were ordained as a monk. By practicing the mantra recitation through the last night of his 7th year Nāgārjuna managed to escape death. In the year which followed he received initial ordination of a monk and became well versed in variant of Buddhism.

From Saraha Nāgārjuna received secret knowledge of Mantrāyāna. Being proficient in all these branches Nāgārjuna went to meet his friends. After the meeting he becomes a full-fledged monk.

From legends we come to know that when a terrible famine raged in Magadha for 12 years, Saraha asked Nāgārjuna to help the destitute monks of Nalanda. Best instructed thus by his preceptor, Nāgārjuna felt the need to learn the art of making gold which would enable him to help them. With two sandalwood leaves and by chanting appropriate mantras Nāgārjuna succeeded in acquiring the power for transporting a person to wherever he wished to go. With the help of these techniques Nāgārjuna became successful to cross the ocean and reach an island where there was a famous alchemist. Nāgārjuna begged the alchemist to impart him the knowledge of making gold. The alchemist realized that Nāgārjuna must be in possession of esoteric technique which had enabled him to cross the sea. So he told Nāgārjuna to exchange crafts with him. Nāgārjuna agreed to this and gave him the leaf which was in his hand. The alchemist did not know that Nāgārjuna had hidden another sandalwood leaf in his sandal so he thought that even if he taught Nāgārjuna the trick he won't be able to leave the island. But Nāgārjuna could return to his country and turned a lot of iron into gold. This eradicated the poverty of the Sangha and finally he became the abbot of Nalanda. He

defeated many learned rivals in philosophical debates and established the Mahāyāna philosophy.

According to Dr Peter Della Santina, the translator of Suhrullekha gave very profound advice to the King Gautamiputra Satkarṇi on the surgical for morality Nāgārjuna mentioned the seven Noble Treasures given by the Buddha to his only son Rahula. There is a very interesting story regarding the bestowing of this teaching. It is said that when the Buddha returned to Kapilavāstu for a bride period his son Rahula went to him that worldly possessions such as houses, gold, silver, etc are all perishable and so it would be worthwhile to possess the seven Noble Treasures such as faith, morality, giving, study, modesty, humility and wisdom. So Nāgārjuna also being profoundly wise in the knowledge of emptiness did not rule out the importance of morality. Nāgārjuna also mentions there things as oldest worthy of recollection. They are the three Gems namely the Buddha, Dharma and sangha, giving, morality and the gods. But the reason behind the mention of gods is that gods had attained their higher station by means of the morality and mental development practiced in their former lives so bringing them to mind one may receive the inspiration to practice morality and meditation as the gods did. At the same time Nāgārjuna urges us to avoid six indulgences namely gambling, association with unwholesome friends, alcohol, etc.

Nāgārjuna also advises his friend regarding how everyday social affairs should be conducted. He points out to the king that actions and intentions are the two important things on the basis of which the nature of a person is to be judged. Nāgārjuna opines that we should make friends with persons with whole some actions and intentions.

Nāgārjuna had a deep social awareness. He says that the blind, the poor, the homeless and the crippled should always be provided with food and drink. This shows that as early as in 2nd century C.E Nāgārjuna had a very advanced conception of social awareness. Nāgārjuna was also deeply concerned about the reformation of the prisoner. In this he anticipates the social enlightened philosophy of the 18th century; Europe which said that wrong doers should be punished with the intention to correct them and not for taking revenge. They should be dealt with in such a way that might enable them to be accepted in the mainstream of the society once again. For the well known and hardened criminals, Nāgārjuna prescribes at must the punishment of deportation.

Nāgārjuna was immensely successful. The success of Nāgārjuna and his books he in the fact that they propagate a version of Buddhism which is comprehensive, useful and accessible to the ordinary man.

**The New Buddhist Space and Mission :** there is a debate regarding the philosophical affiliation of Nāgārjuna. We cannot say for certain whether he was a follower of the traditional Theravāda Buddhism or a devotee of the Mahāyāna faith. In solving the issue we can depend on two letters presumably written by him. Through the nation of emptiness propounded by Nāgārjuna faith, Nāgārjuna himself was not much aware of the fact.

The destinations between classical (Theravāda) and Mahāyāna Buddhism were largely philosophical. The former was conservative and later was religiosity. The former stressed upon the attainment of individual perfection by individual effort and the imagines angelic and socially engaged bodhisattva who would help common people to attain perfection. So far the Mahayana thought the attainment of perfection that Buddhism does not represent a new sort of human vehicle. Its aim is not to transport realm from one realm to another but a vehicle which transform people in their own realm.

Through all these sections are somewhat disunited, a general theme seems to be emerging. It is almost evident that Nāgārjuna gives primary importance to observe a virtuous life style than the achievement of higher knowledge.

Through both the Theravāda and Mahāyāna philosophy agreed that wisdom (Prajna) and compassion (Karuṇa) were the ultimate virtues, there was a difference of opinions regarding their respective importance. But Nāgārjuna emphasized the importance of leading a life based on ethics. Through the Buddha's law of existence has two aspects one of meditative non action and other of positive action.

Nāgārjuna believed that the road to Buddhahood passes through the latter. The dharma in spite in being shuffle and hard to comprehend especially the philosophical issue, if it in practical in right earnest, will help us to tide over these philosophical debates. This is a general advice which can be followed by ordinary monks or nuns; Nāgārjuna further adds that following a path based upon strong ethical principles is also the best policy. This is said to be true because if the King himself guides his conduct by ethical principle, justices will be established in his Kingdom and as a result everyone will be benefited. This benefit will far surpass the realm of narrow and temporary material wealth and power.

In present and future the only important thing is action. By the physicality of the deeds meritorious or detrimental karma is accommodated and so we are truly the makers of our own destiny. But the circumstances of own life changes a prince may give up the throne, as the Buddha did but at the

sometime he may do it unwillingly. Young men become old one day and beauties fade away very quickly. But Nāgārjuna reminder his readers that all these changes can have a reverse duration, material poverty may be transformed into spiritual riches.

Nāgārjuna was great scholar and a great teacher. Above all, he was a great sage who realized that the mundane life in an illusion. So it is quite natural that his memory would be secured by myths and legends. There was also a second Nāgārjuna who was a famous alchemist and a follower of the Tantric cult. Besides, he was also a renowned exponent of the Mahāyanic philosophy. Tradition attributed some of the alchemist Nagarjuna's creation to the sage Nāgārjuna.

There are some books and treatises which may be safely attributed to Nagarjuna, the sage. They are (a) Mūla Mādhyamika Kārikā (b) Mahāprajñāpāramitā Śāstra (c) Dvādasa Nikāya Śāstra (d) Dasabhumī Vibhāsa Śāstra (e) Śūnyatā Saptati (f) Yukti śaṣṭikā (g) Vighraha Vyavartani (h) Suhrullekha (i) Ratnāvali, among these treatise we can get hold of item a and g in their Sanskrit original, item b and c in Chinese translation only. The second Nāgārjuna composed many works in medicine and chemistry and these treatises are sometimes attributed Nāgārjuna the philosopher.

It is very likely that mystery around Nāgārjuna will be never should to satisfy everyone as there is real dearth of archeological and chorological material about it. However, he will always represent a high watermark in the human morality. Nāgārjuna propagation of emptiness and prajñāpāramitā have broken the barrier between the temporal and the eternal.

It was Nāgārjuna who discovered the Prajñāpāramitā which teaches us a philosophy which is beyond the realm of ordinary wisdom. It says something more than the four noble truths and the law of causation but four noble truths and the law of causation but there is no contradiction between them. The revelation of the Prajñāpāramitā may be said to be the second turning of the wheel of law and a logical collusion of the fusty.

The Prajñāpāramitā literature in that Ultimate Reality has no beginning, end or change or all phenomena are usual and they have only a relative existence. The verve (feeling), Samjāna (Concepts) and Sanskara (confirmation) have no real existence, they are illusory in nature. The ultimate truth is neither temporal nor eternal, but void. When all appearances absolutely cease, we can claim to have attained absolute wisdom. The perfect Bodhisattva is someone who is aware that there are no beings, not even Bodhisattva and helps endless number of people to attain Nirvāṇa.



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This concept will free the follower from every false notion of ego or glory. The rewards is not Nirvāṇa but in the attempt to attain it. The concepts that Buddha Propagated in the deer park at Sarnath namely sorrow (9 duksha) non self (anatama) impermanence (anitya) are all found in the Prajñāparamitā literature.

Nāgārjuna expounded a philosophy which avoided the two extremes of affirmation and negation and this became known as the Madhyamika philosophy of the central position. But we cannot question the reality or validity of the four noble truths or the Laws of causation. If a person realizes the four noble truths in the first stage the means of realization of the truth are ethics and meditation and in the second the means is wisdom. The ultimate stage of wisdom can be attained only through the initial stage of ethics and meditation. Nāgārjuna was famous not only for his great learning but also for his strictly disciplined life style.

### Footnote :

1. According to Laṅkāvatārasūtra and Mañjuśrīmūlatantrasūtra, he lived for six hundred years.
2. However, the sinful mara and his entourage were displeased with such extensive noble works performed by the Ācārya. One of the mara-s entered into the womb of the queen of the King Udayana Bhadra or Udayi Bhadra with evil intention to create interruption with the noble works. Later, he was born as a son to the king who was named Kumara Shaktiman. Years later, when the prince grew up, once his mother presented him with a rare, fine and costly garment. But the prince refused it by saying, "Put this away for me. I shall wear it when I become the ruler of the kingdom." "You shall never rule as your father has obtained the accomplishment of immortality equal to that of Ācārya Nāgārjuna. Your father will not die for as long as the ācārya lives." The boy began to weep with grief and so his mother continued, "Don't cry son! The ācārya is a Bodhisattva, and if you ask him for his head he will not refuse. In this way, your father will die and you will also acquire the kingdom."

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# Applied Buddhism in Tibetan Daily Life and Significance of Mantras/Dhārāṇīs

**Sonam Zangpo**

## **Introduction :**

Tibetan Buddhism (TB) is a vast field of study and so is the Tibetan daily life and experience. Buddhism is applied in their daily life since morning to night, monastery to mountain, healthy to wealthy, home to road, speech to action, active to passive, treating diseases to constructing the houses, and over all from birth to death and so forth. The intention of benevolence is always present in the depth of their mind and consciousness. To understand them better, one has to view through the eyes of Tibetan and also has to keep the knowledge of TB and their uninterrupted traditions. Buddhism was sprouted there from Ārya-bhūmi, the modern India and was revived there from time to time by Indian adept masters. Thus, numerous Indian Buddhist practices were survived by Tibetans which can be seen alive even today with slightly changes especially in their performances. In which way, other aspects of Buddhism were promulgated in the world. Likewise, TB is also practicing by numerous people of the world with faith and internal charm. And even today their daily life is very peace appealing and soothing. Is this not an application of Buddhism in their daily life?

Both monastic and social daily practices of Tibetan spirituality are one of the living cultures in the world today. Their daily practices are fully engaged with various rituals and receptions of epoch making galaxies of luminary masters. The principal teachings of the Buddha, the Teacher and his disciple are inherited to us through a pious and long tradition of transmission till today. This is an evidence of TB as an Applied Buddhism (AB). The AB is not something anew discovery about the Buddhism in general and particularly in TB. So, only the approach is an innovative and transformation of terms and language as well in the relevance of their living practices. It emphasized to keep intact us from our action and attitude toward the benefit of infinite sentient beings that are directly or indirectly helping us at least to make us a good human and a responsible being of the earth and eventually the Bodhisattva, the Supreme Being and the

Buddhahood. TB also utters about the inter-relationship between the social and spiritual life through applying the Buddhist aphorism and esotericism in their daily life and spiritual practices.

### **Applied Tibetan Buddhism (ATB)**

We are living in the 21st century, the modern world of Science and Technology. These two fields of learning had changed fabulous in our mind and matters with an unprecedented way. Due to that our modern generation is very much excited toward it. At one hand it has been affecting almost all our ancient faith and festivals, customs and cultures, dresses and dances, serene retreat practices and full participations in it and so on. On the other hand, we have great expectations from them for the huge welfare of the sentient beings. Anyway, we must be very careful to apply our physical science and mental science for the upliftment of humanity.

The ATB always inspires the mass of people to live and let live the life and conduct of the ideal Bodhisattva and Buddha. If it is not able to do some help to others then at least one should not hurt and harm nobody by the body, the speech and ultimately the mind. Forasmuch, one has better understanding the actions and attitudes of the saints that practitioner will be deeply engaged in the practices of the Dharma in one's own daily life. This is our understanding about the term AB in everyday life and walks of the Tibetan people.

Both Applied and Engaged Buddhism are same in terms of what traditional Buddhists are practicing in their daily life since the time immemorial. The motives and results are similar but merely the interpretations are seen different in different cultures among the Buddhist communities around the world. It is well aware that true teachings of all the teachers are purposed for all. It is an individual person who makes walls of difference with one another at the ground of faith, interest, mental potentiality, intelligence, tradition handed down from a master to disciple, and geographical feature of the place or country. Simultaneously, by caste, creed, culture and custom of the community that belong to us.

Like the nature, Buddhism is for all living beings of the different realms. It was our blunders and errors that construct barriers between us and the nature, the law of universal. Like in the name of religion, language, caste, status, state, atomic powers etc. in our society. Due to that we could not perceive what is going behind and its beyond of the barriers? Through this, we are trying our best effort to demolish the barriers which are constantly

producing pains, problems and petty notions among us in the long history of Buddhism and its pure practices. Can we overcome over those existing poor plights and problems in a day? Don't we need to study oneself as a human rather than an animal? Is AB a single way to cope up with all recent problems and issues burning across the world alike? Is AB essential for all or just for Buddhists? We all want happiness and peace and from where that situations will come to us? If we are more practical in our precepts definitely we can change the world either an individually or with group. Whatever the forms of Buddhism like Tharavāda, Vietnamese, Chinese, Korean, Japanese etc. are disseminated in different countries of the world is rather an example of AB. Because of that it is firmly existed till date and passing on the holy traditions to next generation.

### **Dalai Lama and Applied Buddhism (AB)**

H.H. the XIV Dalai Lama has given globally reception in the 21st century. He is only Tibetan spiritual master who has confluence the great cultures of Buddhism in the present era. He is working across the globe for peace, progress and prosperity of Buddhism. It is his persistent endeavor to acquaint the Tibetan practices to the world with humble attitude and the strong spirit of spirituality. He is a worldwide famed philanthropy who has connected east and west by travelling and delivering discourses about Tibetan understanding of Buddhism and his life long experience like other Buddhist masters in the past as well in the present. Since his early morning wake up to early bed in the night, he is completely involved in numerous tasks of dharma practices within himself and other mass of the society. He has dedicated his life for others and dharma practice. Hence, his figure is more than those achievements he got from different dignitaries of the various organizations of the world. What he deserves that cannot be sketch in letters and words. So, to understand what indeed the ATB is. It is suggested to study the lives and works of Tibetan spiritual masters and other practitioners. It will certainly help for further understanding of the above mentioned term. Therefore, in the present context, he is the most suitable living example of the ATB and no other paradigms are required here.

Buddhism got many dimensions in course of time, place and space since the time of its founder, the Sage of Sakya clan. The term AB itself is a paradigm of all happenings by means of distinct name and culture that we have inherited so far. We have short times in terms of life span which itself is uncertain and lots to achieve on other hand. Thus, we are looking such

quick ways to achieve the things that we long for passionately and sometimes at the stake of our life. We forgot what we are venturing and not even attempt to understand whether it is right or wrong method to avail them? What we are deeming and doing are they resembling all through the ways? Ponder over it attentively. Because it is our life and it can remarks the position of AB in our daily life. Buddhism assists us to guide that how to lead a happier life and achieve the temporal and ultimate goals of life. Practicing the heritage of spirituality as much as in a life is the prime focus of AB. Thus, Buddhism is a platform which gives direction and destination to all without any discrimination that prevailed in many societies and including Tibetan communities as well. It guides through instructions of the teacher that how to appease oneself and other with thoughts and conducts of altruistic vow of Mahāyāna beings.

### **Mantras and Dhāraṇī (Formulas/ Retentions) : Meaning and Significance**

The experience and practice of Tibetans are recitation of short mantras and prayers repeatedly throughout the day. Usually, all mantras are written in Sanskritized Tibetan form and were spell out in Sanskrit sound. It is because to have continuous touch with the blessings of Sanskrit, the mother of many languages of the world. Buddhist mantras were translated into Tibetan very later on but that translated forms were not widely spread as much as what the Sanskritized Tibetan forms are accepted in every practice. Both 'dhāraṇī' (gzungs) and 'mantra' (sngags) signifies the similar meaning as formula and retention in English. That is why usually the words used together in Tibetan text. But in some special case the word 'gzungs' and 'sngags' are used separately as well. So, there are four types of dharaṇīs. They are 1. Dharma or word dharaṇī; the ability to retain names, terms, or words through the power of memory 2. Meaning dhāraṇī; the ability to retain the specific and general meanings of all phenomena through the power of mindfulness 3. Mantra dhāraṇī; the ability to convert any syllable or syllables into a mantra for eradicating infectious diseases and interfering forces 4. Patience dhāraṇī; the ability to endure patiently emptiness discussed without being terrified by it.

Dhāraṇī signifies the capability to hold words and meaning of the dharma through the force of exalted mindfulness and wisdom. It also means mantra through the power of which one invokes blessings and the ability to eliminate interfering impediments or forces. The recitation of mantra or dhāraṇī secures from the following points.

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- a. Unimpaired memory b. Un-diverted or uninterrupted reflection c. Un-observed intellect and d. Great intelligence.

Very often dhara is understood as sort of some religious objects or relics that concerned to the Buddha, Bodhisattvas and other Buddhist eminent masters who are believed very sacred and blessing one for all. They are placed in the newly constructed images, stūpas, all sorts of prayer wheels and so forth. Therefore, under the consecration procedure of dhāraṇī the following things are included as sacred mantra, Holy Scriptures, statue, stūpas, piece of cloth of spiritual masters, relics of the Buddha himself and so on.

The 'mantra' means 'mind protection' and 'words of power'. It is called mantra due to protecting mind from the sufferings of all evil states and other circumstances occurred in life. Sometimes, it is also said so because of unification of both method and wisdom itself. Due to repeatedly reciting and chanting it again and again for numerous times, it is also uttered mantra.

Mantra in Sanskrit means 'ngags' in Tibetan. This is often used as a synonym for the tantra 'gsang-sngags' (secret tantra) in Tibetan. Basically, the practice of tantra is meant for persons of highly sharp faculty who aspire to practice the path of union of wisdom understanding emptiness and great compassion aimed ultimately at the actualization of the great wisdom. There are four distinguishing features of mantra (tantra). They are i. clear and unconfusing, ii. manifold method, iii. easier to practice and iv. require sharp intellect. In the same way, there are four states of tantric experience and they are 1. awaking state, 2. dream state, 3. state of sound sleep and 4. fourth one or the completion state.

Generally, the mantra is kind of secret teaching which is practiced in a confidential or secret way. By reciting practice of mantras and dhāraṇīs one can accumulate many merits and fulfill one's all wishes in a life. There are four enjoyments of the mantra. They are 1. Joyous, 2. Supreme joyous, 3. Distinct joyous and 4. Innate joyous. Likewise, by practice of mantra one can also be capable to accomplish four activities i.e. peace, extensive, empowerment and wrathful.

There are three classes of mantra and they are i. secret mantra; symbolizing the both union of method and wisdom path, ii. wisdom mantra; symbolizing the method aspect of the path, iii. retention (dhāraṇī) mantra; symbolizing the wisdom aspect of the path.

### Significance of Mantras and dhāraṇī

There are many mantras in TB and all are categorized into five classes.

They are physical mantra, transcendental (supra physical) mantra, seed mantra, heart mantra and close essence mantra. The chanting of mantras and dhāraṇīs can be seen in every spheres of Tibetan Buddhist daily life. Whether it is a social ceremony, religious fest and functions that begins with chanting of some mantras or reciting a couple of prayers. The chanting of mantras are the daily practices of Buddhist life and beliefs in the world in general and particularly in the Tibetans. There are some mantras which often recited and sounded at tip of their tongue or in mouth. The perception is that through chanting mantras as much as by the practitioner helps to purify the evils of one's body, speech and mind. Mantras can be chanted either silently or little loudly in any time of the day. A mantra is the key to connect every devotee with his or her choice of tutelary deities and the Buddhas. As a result, mantras are the shortest form of Tibetan practice to visualize the concerned deity in a life.

Virtually, ATB speaks about the different deities and eventually all are the mental manifestations of the Buddha himself. There are more than 7 hundreds deities regarded to Kālacakra Tantra. Thus, the Buddha is depicted along with the four particular deities in the surrounding of him to exhibit his special motifs and aspects during the practice of meditation. For instance, Avaloketiśvara is the manifestation of the Buddha's compassion, Mañjuśrī is the manifestation of the Buddha's wisdom, Vajrapāṇi is the manifestation of the Buddha's power and the female form of deity Tārā is the manifestation of the Buddha's force that inspires to execute action. Each of them has their own secret and sacred mantra. Every seed syllable (letter) folded with the mantra of individual deities. One has to recite and chant all these mantras again and again either three, twenty one, one hundred times for decent blessing or as much as one can reckon the chanting, if the person has time after the meditation.

The symbolic sign or seed syllable of the mantra of the Buddha is 'Mum'.

The seed syllable of Avaloketiśvara is 'Hri'.

The seed syllable of Mañjuśrī is 'Dhi'.

The seed syllable of Vajrapāṇi is 'Hung'.

The seed syllable of Tārā is 'Tam'.

These symbolic signs are written in different colors to identify them in their individual form of the deity. For example, the seed mantra 'Mum' is written in golden color which indicates the complexion of the Buddha. Likewise, 'Hri' is written in white color. 'Dhi' is written in yellow. 'Hum' is



written in blue and 'Tam' is written in green color. Therefore, the Buddha is portrait in a golden radiant dice (hue). Avaloketiśvara is in white hue, Mañjuśri is in golden hue, Vajrapāṇi is in dark blue and Tārā is in green like a jewel of panna. The colors of all seed syllables of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas were done as accordingly to their complexion.

'Mum' is the first letter of the Muni and it indicates the Śākyamūni Buddha. The sound of Om is the sign (mark) of voidness and the Mum is conventional phenomena. Thus, the Mum represents the unification of voidness and its subjects or identification of convention.

'Hri' is the seed syllable of Avaloketiśvara. It is also the seed syllable of Amitabha Buddha who belongs to the Tathāgata family and Avaloketiśvara also belongs to the same family.

'Dhi' is Sanskrit word and refers to Bodhi (Enlightened). Mañjuśri is the god of the wisdom and knowledge. Thus, it is the seed syllable of Mañjuśri.

'Hum' is the seed syllable of Vajrapāṇi. He is the idol form of the mind of the Buddha. Hum is also the seed syllable of the Akṣobhya Buddha who belongs to the Tathagata family and Vajrapāṇi also belongs to this family.

'Tam' is seed syllable of the Tārā. It is the first letter of Tārā.

### **Short Descriptions of Five Mantras**

Mantra plays a pivotal role in the life of Tibetan Buddhist people. Here is the succinct description of five mantras belongs to the Buddha Śākyamūni and other four Bodhisattvas as mentioned earlier. The complete individual syllable mantras of all of them are as given below.

Om Muni Muni Mahamuniye Svāhā (Buddha ŚākyamŚĀRāṇṣṣḍūni)

Om Mani Padme Hung (Avaloketiśvara)

Om Vagiṇri Mum (Mañjuśri)

Om Vajrapāṇi Hung (Vajrapāṇi)

Om Tare Tuttare Ture Svāhā (Tara)

'Om Muni Muni Mahāmuniye Svāha' is the mantra of the Buddha Śākyamūni. 'Om' is the short form of three Sanskrit letters i.e. 'a-u-m'. This represents the purified body, speech and mind of the Buddha and it also symbolized the impure body, speech and mind known as three doors of the practitioner oneself. Simultaneously, it also remarks the theology of Trikāya system (The three Bodies of Buddha) i.e. Dharma-kāya, Saṃbhoga-kāya and Nirmāṇa-kāya respectively.

'Muni' means sage or saint, 'Mahāmuniye' means great sage or seer.

The practitioner who wants to remember and concentrate on the Buddha has to recite and chant the mantra of the Buddha as mentioned earlier.

**'Om Mani Padme Hung'** is the mantra of Avaloketiśvara and one of the most popular Bodhisattva in Tibetans. 'Om' represents the uncleanness of the body, speech and mind of the practitioner as mentioned earlier. So, it should become the sacredness of the body, speech and mind of the Buddha. 'Mani' is a Sanskrit word which refers to precious jewel and is symbolized of method. In the teachings of Mahāyāna and according to the deity-yoga of the tantrayāna, method means an Enlightened mind (Bodhicitta), great Compassion (mahākaruṇā), great Love (mahāmaitre). 'Padme' means lotus flower and it symbolized to wisdom that which realized the emptiness. Thus, 'mani' and 'padme' also indicate the method and wisdom. 'Hung' or 'Hum' symbolized with inseparability, the union of all inseparable forms. 'Hum' reflects that by our own character or behavior we can covert our unholy body, speech and mind into the holiness form of the body, speech and mind of the Buddha. It shows that our unsacred those three doors should be changed into the sacred three doors of the Buddha. This mantra and dharāṇī is a very famous in the Tibetan domain. So, it is easily familiar to all. The literal sense of this mantra is as 'Oh! One who holds lotus and gem in his hands.'

The practitioner who wants to meditate on the immaculate mind generation has to focus and concentrate on the mantra of Avaloketiśvara by reciting it again and again. His mantra is also recited and chanted both afore and after the death of someone as a dedication of merits. It can also chant at any time in a day if a person has leisure time. His Holiness the Dalai Lama has asserted that one has to chant this mantra one lac or more than that at the death of one's parents and relatives to extend benefit to the departed one. From the view of the method, this mantra is very beneficial to improve the spiritual thoughts and actions.

There is another Tibetan saying about this mantra that it is very easiest among all the rest mantras. It can be even chants or says by a baby child who can speak the words like 'mum' and 'dad'. The character of this mantra is that one who can learn this once can never forget it again in a life.

'Om Vagiśri Mum' is the mantra of Mañjuśrī. 'Vag' is used as speech in Sanskrit and 'isvari' means god or lord. He confers the boons like intelligence, memory, wisdom and eloquence. So, he is the god of Learning and Eloquence. Similarly, 'Mañju' means lovely, beautiful, charming and 'Śrī' means splendor, radiation, brilliance.

The Mañjuśrī's mantra Om Vagiśri Mum is very beneficial for the young students. By reciting or chanting of this one can develops the intelligence

and sharpness eloquence. It also helps to enhance the memory power of oneself. Another mantra of Mañjuśrī is 'Om A Ra Pa Tsa Na Dhi'. When someone recites this mantra, then one has to recite the last syllable of this mantra i.e. 'Dhi' continuously for eight times and more than that in a single breath. It is preferred that this mantra or dhāraṇī should be recited early in the morning just one's get up from the bed. It is also said that by muttering this syllable continuously as long as helps to sharpen the heavy tongue of a person. Thus, those people who are facing difficulty in murmuring due to heavy tongue problems in spoken will be also solved by reciting this mantra. It is also beneficial for a stammered (stutterer).

'Om Vajrapāi Hung/ Hum' is a mantra of Vajrapāṇi. 'Pāṇi' means hand in Sanskrit. So, it means one who holds vajra (thunderbolt) in his hand. Here, 'Vajra' again refers to the unification of both method and wisdom. If there are both vajra and ghaṇṭīkā (bell) together in that case also symbolized to method and wisdom. In case, if there is only vajra then again it is symbolized to the union of both method and wisdom. Often Avaloketiśvara, Mañjuśrī and Vajrapāṇi are depicted together in the form of their respective hue or three different colored i.e. white, yellow and blue stupas respectively and is known as 'rigs-gsum mgon-po' (trikūlanātha) in Tibetan culture. At the same time, they were believed among those Eight Bodhisattvas or disciples of Buddha śakyamūni<sup>1</sup> in Mahāyana tradition.

The mantra of Vajrapāṇi, Om Vajrapāṇi Hung helps to remove many unknown hindrances of us. So, this mantra is beneficial to shun away the invisible obstacles of us that make distractions in many spheres of our life.

'Om Tāre Tuttāre Ture Svāhā' is the mantra of Tārā goddess and one of the most popular female Bodhisattva in Tibetans. 'Tārā' means savior or one who takes to liberation. 'Tutare' represents the profound feeling of liberation. 'Svāhā' means stillness or let foundation. The mantra of Tārā is helpful in the blessing of longevity. It is more beneficial to someone especially those who fallen sick and the treatments are going on for the rapid recovery of the health of the patient also. It is also helpful to favor the fate of the business men in their job of trade and merchandise.

There are different mantras corresponding to all above mentioned Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. The root purpose of chanting and reciting those mantras and dhāraṇīs are just to help others and attain the Enlightenment for the sake of the other beings. When we are with effort fully engaged in to achieve such goal then at a same time we also get some unstable benefits like long life, success, and increase in knowledge and wisdom etc. Despite

of all these, we also chant the mantras in some other activities of our life. Like to use and for benefit of pacifying some miserable conditions, power and anger etc. or fulfillment of such activities to become the ability of the energy of mantras, one should needs to attain first of all knowledge of emptiness and Bodhicitta (Awakened mind). This is what the mantras said and included the depth meaning of the region.

There are many mantras which begin with 'Om' but not ended with 'Svāhā'. Contrary to this, there is Svāhā the end of some mantras while not in the beginning of the mantras. Again there are some mantras which have both those two syllables at the beginning as well as at the end. Similarly, there are some mantras which have none of the both syllables either at the beginning or at the end.

### Conclusion

It is well accepted that all forms of Tibetan Buddhism are inherited from India. Tibetan people study the Tripiṭaka<sup>2</sup> and the Four Classes of Tantra.<sup>3</sup> Basically, tantra was highly originated in India particularly in Bengal and Kashmir. When it was spread in Tibet it got another appellation as Vajrayāna (Diamond vehicle) and Mantrayāna (retention vehicle). TB is a form of Mahāyāna Buddhism (great vehicle). They practiced both the features of Bodhisattva and tantric deities. As a result, they practice the doctrine of emptiness, selflessness, awakened mind, great compassion and so forth in their everyday life.

Buddhism has dominantly influenced the Tibetan society from more than thousand years. Since then Buddhism occupies in their everyday life and culture. How much we have different forms of Buddhism in present day all are by the dint of application of teachings of the Buddha in our daily life. Similarly, in every form of TB, they have unshakeable faith and devotion to all above mentioned Buddha and Bodhisattvas without any dispute and distinction. As a consequence, their mantras or dhāraṇīs are always chanting by Tibetans in their everyday life.

### 'Bhavatu Sarva Mangalam'

**Note :** Abbreviations used in the article are as below.

**AB** (Applied Buddhism), **ATB** (Applied Tibetan Buddhism), **HH** (His

Holiness), TB (Tibetan Buddhism)

**Foot note :**

1. Mañjuri
  2. Vajrapai
  3. Avaloketisvara
  4. Kitigarbha
  5. Sarvanirvaraṇa Viskambhin
  6. Akasagarbha
  7. Maitreya
  8. Samantabhadra
2. The three baskets of Buddha's teachings are called so in Sanskrit and they are as; 1. Vinaya piṭaka, 2. Sutra piṭaka and 3. Abhidharma piṭaka. They are as; 1. Action (kriyā) tantra 2. Performance (cārya) tantra, 3. Yoga tantra and 4. Highest (anuttara) yoga tantra.

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# The Concept of Right Livelihood: A study of Theravada Buddhism

Neeru Barua

We are faced so many known and unknown problems in our daily life. But in the world there is an only one common problem that is suffering (dukkha), which is universal in ranges. If anything becomes a problem, there is bound to be suffering, unsatisfactory and conflict-conflict between desire and the facts of life. And naturally our every endeavor is to solve the problem, to remove the unsatisfactoriness, to control conflict of mental and physical. This is endeavor itself is pain a wretched state of mind.

The solution for this problem suffering or dukkha, conflict, the unsatisfactoriness of life, is the Noble Eightfold Path put forward by the enlightenment one Buddha. Not only Buddhist every men and women are encouraged to mould his life but also the Noble Eight Path as taught by the Buddha. He who adjusts his life according to this noble way of living will be free from miseries and calamities both in this life time and hereafter. He or She also is able to develop his or her mind by restrung from evil and observing morality. These are given below;

1. Right View (Sammādiṭṭi), 2. Right Aspiration (Sammāsaṅkappa), 3. Right Speech (Sammavācā). 4. Right Action (Sammākammanta), 5. Right Livelihood (Sammā Ājīva), 6. Right Effort (Sammāvāyāma), 7. Right Mindfulness (Sammā Āsati) and 8. Right Concentration (Sammāsamādi)<sup>1</sup>. It can be compared to a road map. Here, this Path is arranged in three aspects or three groups.

1. Right View (Sammādiṭṭi)	Wisdom group
2. Right Aspiration (Sammāsaṅkappa)	
3. Right Speech (Sammā vācā)	Morality or Virtue Group
4. Right Action (Sammākammanta)	
5. Right Livelihoods (sammā ājīva)	
6. Right Effort (Sammā vāyāma)	Concentration Group
7. Right Mindfulness (Sammāsaṭi)	
8. Right Concentration (Sammā samādi)	

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## **The Concept of Right Livelihood: A study of Theravada Buddhism**

In Theravāda Buddhism livelihood play a great important role to development of human faculty. Livelihood (*sammā ājiva*) is the fifth step on the Buddha's Noble Eightfold Path. Livelihood is the work we do in order to live. To be 'right' or 'wise' in the full sense of the word, a livelihood would;

1. have to provide one with at least one's basic needs,
2. it would have to be in accordance with ethical principles and
3. it would have to make a useful and indeed a beneficial contribution to society.

The Buddha mentioned as examples of wrong livelihood, dealing in weapons, human beings (slavery, people smuggling, certain types of prostitution and living off the income generated by it), trade in flesh, manufacturing and selling alcohol and poisons<sup>2</sup>. Today this list could be increased considerably. The Buddha said that to be 'learned and skilled in one's craft' (*bahusaccañ ca sippañ ca*) is a great blessing.<sup>3</sup> He described a wholesome and honest income as being 'earned by hard work, by strength of arm and sweat of brow, honestly and lawfully'<sup>4</sup>. For example, whether living off investments would be a right or wrong livelihood would depend on what one's money was invested in. We would normally think of being a doctor, a nurse, a teacher, a businessman, an engineer, a police and so many job as being right livelihoods, but, it would depend just how these professions were practiced. So right livelihood is not onlyt what type of work we do, but also how we do our work.

Buddha is the founder of the Path. It is finally leads to the attainment of ultimate peace, happiness satisfactoriness. The third and the last number of Morality or Virtue group is Right Livelihood (*Sammā Ajīvika*). Here 'right' means legal, licit, rightful, just, permissible, proper, unique wholesome etc. And 'livelihood' means proper occupation, job, employment, living, maintenance, substance etc. Right Livelihood is totally purified occupation, which there is no involvement or attachment any types of sin. Finally, right livelihood means a uncommon occupation which leads to live honestly. T W Rhys Davids said about this; in the right way, as ought to best.<sup>5</sup> Another Buddhist scholar Yogāvacāra Rahula pointed out; 'To acquire a means of blameless wholesome livelihood, not involved in greedy, hateful or selfish ambitions which karmically unwholesome. This is right livelihood.'<sup>6</sup> Thahissaro writes; there is the case where a noble disciple having abandoned dishonest livelihood keeps his life going with right livelihood. This is called livelihood.<sup>7</sup> A well known and famous Vietnamese Zen teacher Thich Nhat Hanh

wrote, "To practice Right known and famous Livelihood (*samyak ājiva*), you have to find a way to earn your living without transgressing your ideals of love and compassion. The way you support yourself can be an expression of your deepest self, or it can be a source of suffering for you and others. " ... Our vocation can nourish our understanding and compassion, or erode them. We should be awake to the consequences, far and near, of the way we earn our living."<sup>8</sup>

I like to say here, avoid unsocial activities, or unwholesome activities, earned money by dishonesty way avoiding these types of activities to take proper occupation is called livelihood. Buddha uttered, to avoid false or unwholesome activities and to accept purified activities.<sup>9</sup> The flickering, fickle mind is difficult to guard and also difficult to control is quite impossible. In Buddha's teaching is right livelihood took a high place. In daily life, we have done true-false and wholesome-unwholesome activities. It is created by mind. Buddha mentioned about this; whatever harm an enemy may do to an enemy, or a hater to a hater, an ill-directed mind inflicts on oneself a greater harm. Neither mother- father nor any other relative can do one greater good than ones own well-directed mind.<sup>10</sup> The Buddha uttered these verses;

Associate not with evil companion; do not seek the fellowship of the vile. Associate with good friends; seek the fellowship of noble men.<sup>11</sup>

Should a seeker not find a companion who is better or equal, let him resolutely pursue a solitary course; there is no 'fellowship with the fool.<sup>12</sup>

Right livelihood, play a nice role in our society or state or a country to uphold the each living. Men or women take varieties occupation in daily life. There are unlimited occupations. It is memorable that If you like to live honestly, you have to need a better and purified job first. Here we have to need Avoiding Wrong Livelihood. There are four kinds of happiness that may be achieved by a lay person who enjoys sensual pleasures, depending on time and occasion, they are like; the happiness of ownership, the happiness of enjoyment, the happiness freedom from debt, and the happiness of blamelessness.<sup>13</sup> In this connection, the Buddha uttered the following verses, which show us why we should acquire wealth and how to acquire and utilize it for our livelihood;

The wise man trained and disciplined,  
Shines out like a beacon-fire.



## **The Concept of Right Livelihood: A study of Theravada Buddhism**

He gathers wealth just as the bee  
Gathers 'honey, and it grows  
Like an ant-hill higher yet,  
With wealth so gained the laymen can  
Devote it to his people good.  
He should divide his wealth in four  
(These will most advantage bring).  
One part he may enjoy to will,  
Two parts he should put to work,  
The fourth part he should set aside  
As reserve in times of need.<sup>14</sup>

There are four other factors that help to the layman to the attainment of welfare and peace and happiness in the present day. They are; <sup>15</sup>

1. Accomplishment in initiative: whatever may be the means by which a clansman earns his living-whether by farming, trade, raising cattle, archery, government service, or some other craft-he is skilful and diligent.
2. Accomplishment in protection : a clansman sets up protection and guard over the wealth he has acquired by initiative and energy, amassed by the strength of his arms, earned by the sweat of his brow and, gained righteous wealth righteously.
3. Accomplishment in good friendship : whatever a clansman lives village or town, he associates with householders or their sons-whether young of mature virtue, or old of mature virtue-who are accomplished
4. The leading of a balanced life: a clansman knows his income and expenditures lead a balanced life, neither too extravagant nor too frugal [aware]: In this way my income will exceed my expenditures rather than the reverse, 'Just as an appraiser or his apprentice, holding up a scale, knows: 'By so much it has dipped down, by so much it has gone up,' so a clansman knows his income and expenditures lead a balanced life.

The wealth thus amassed has four sources of accretion: avoids womanizing, drunkenness, gambling and evil friendship. Four things that lead to a family man's or woman's welfare and happiness of a clansman in present life.<sup>16</sup>

1. Accomplishment in faith: a clansman is endowed faith in the Enlightenment of the Buddha.

2. Accomplishment in virtuous behavior: a clansman abstain from the destruction of life, from taking what is not given, from sexual misconduct, from false speech, and from liquor, wine, intoxicants, the basis for heedlessness.
3. Accomplishment in generosity: a clansman dwells at home with a heart avoid of the stain of miserliness, freely generous, open-handed, delighting in relinquishment, one devoted to charity, delighting in giving and sharing.
4. Accomplishment in wisdom: a clansman is wise; he possesses the wisdom that discerns arising and passing away, which is noble, penetrative and leads to the complete destruction of sufferings.<sup>17</sup>

In addition, the layman should not indulge in the six following way open to the loss of one's property. A. Addiction to various kinds of intoxicating drugs which create circumstances for negligence. There are six disadvantages in such addiction. Present waste of money, increased quarrelling, liability to sickness, loss of good name, indecent exposure of ones person, and weakling of the intellect. B. Addiction to frequenting the streets at inappropriate hours, which result six disadvantages. They are; one is defenseless and without protection, and so are ones wife and children, is one's property; one is suspected of crimes, one is false report are pinned on one, and one is encounters all sorts of unpleasantness. C. Addiction to frequenting fairs which has also six disadvantages. They are; Where is there dancing? Where is there singing? Where is there playing music? Where is there recitation? Where is there hand-clapping? Where are the drums? D. Addiction gambling also has six disadvantages. They are ; the winners makes enemies, the loser bewails his loss, one wastes one's present wealth, one's word is not trusted in the assembly, one is despised by one's friends and companions, one is not in demand for marriage, because a gambler cannot afford to maintain a family. E. Addiction to keeping bad companions has six disadvantages. They are; any gambler, any glutton, any drunkard, any cheat, any trickster, any bully if friend, his companion. F. Addiction to idleness also has six disadvantages. They are; It is too cold, It is too hot, It is too late, It is too early, I am hungry, I am too full, and then one does not work.<sup>18</sup>

The Buddha talked about many of the central themes of his teaching in terms of their negation, such as impermanence, not-self, and non-clinging. He did the same in his explicit description of what constitutes right livelihood: These are lead to destruction of personal as as social welfare. In the Vanijja Sutta<sup>19</sup> the Buddha said; 'a lay follower should not engage in five

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types of business'. Which five? The five kinds of businesses that should not be undertaken.

- a. Business in weapons: trading in all kinds of weapons and instruments for killing;
- b. Business in human beings: slave trading, prostitution, or the buying and selling of children or adults
- c. Business in meat: "meat" refers to the bodies of beings after they are killed. This includes breeding animals for slaughter
- d. Business in intoxicants: manufacturing or selling intoxicating drinks or addictive drugs
- e. Business in poison : producing or trading in any kind of poison or a toxic product designed to kill.

The Buddhist who adheres to the admonition of the Budd is a seeker after peace and happiness both personally as well as socially. Therefore, Buddhism does not permit dealing in any kind of weaponry, including chemical warfare substance divided into three categories called lethal, incapacitating and harassing, used in battle fronts and categorically condemns any transaction involved in weaponry.<sup>20</sup> These are very harmful for the society and also a state. So that Buddha was suggested to avoid five unethical trades. This are destroyed, ruined, perished and damaged society and also civilianization too. In this context Petter Della Santina said; these five are not recommending ended because they contribute the ill of society, and violet the values of respect for life and for the welfare of other's. Dealing in animal for slaughter violates the respect for life. Dealing slaves violets both respect foe life and right action in personal relationship. Dealing in arms also violates in the values of respect for life; while dealing in poisons or intoxicant also does respect lives and welfare of other. These trades contribute to insecurity, discard and suffering in the world.<sup>21</sup> In this connection we see; The five aspect of training... .. Under taken and practiced conscientiously in order to cut down and clam the excessive wantons and unruliness of mind and body.<sup>22</sup> Along with Right Speech and Right Action, Right Livelihood is part of the "moral conduct" section of the Path. These three folds of the Path are connected to the Five Precepts.<sup>23</sup> Good Buddhist should remind himself to follow these. They are as follows: a. not killing; b. not stealing, 3. not misusing sex, 4. not lying and 5. Not abusing intoxicants

Right Livelihood is, a way to earn a living without compromising the Precepts. It is a way of making a living that does no harm to others.

Buddha advice to his five hundred devotees about necessity of the right livelihood. He uttered;

One who destroys life, utters lies, takes what is not given, goes to another man's wife, and is addicted to intoxicating drinks—such a man digs up his own root even in this world.<sup>24</sup>

The Precepts are not only for Buddhist followers but also for all religion, for all cast, for all race etc. Those who follow these they are honored in society and state. So, it is very much important for developing social welfare. It could be made strong social ties in the world. Phra Sunthorn Plamintr observed;

‘These precepts are not commandments imposed on us, but are on the other hand, the moral code that we willingly undertake to observe out of clear understanding and firm conviction that they are good for ourselves as well as for our society. Our life would be a truly happy and our society would become a much safer more peaceful place to live in if these precepts are observed in earnest.’<sup>25</sup>

To development human life show the respect of precepts. It is very helpful to gradually develop less conflict and less poverty. Five precepts are not for Buddhist, it is a good instrument for all to make a better society in the world.<sup>26</sup> Besides understanding the five precepts merely as set of rules of abstention, a Buddhist should remind himself that through the precepts practices the five Ennoblers as well. Buddha was encouraged to better and honest living. He said; by oneself one must censure oneself and scrutinize oneself. The Self-guarded and mindful will always live in happily.<sup>27</sup> He also added; The evil a witless man does by himself, born of himself and produced by himself, grinds him as a diamond grinds a hard gem.<sup>28</sup> consequently has to need very high determination to taking occupation or job. Without it men or women could not feel in their inner side the faculty of mental.

Right Livelihood means that one should abstain from earning a living through a profession that causes harmful to others. It applies morality specifically to the question of how one earns one's living. This is an aspect of action, but a particularly important one. To play a useful role in family and also society in order to support oneself and to help others, then the work one does is right livelihood. Obviously, it is a moral disciplinary code which leads to develop a healthy family, society and also a state, where there people will be live happily and peacefully. Here clearly observe that Buddhism is strongly opposed to any types of war. There is nothing vague in the teaching of the Buddha. Knowing evil as evil and good as good, why need one

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hesitate to avoid the bad and tread the good path? According to the insight of the Buddhist he can do nothing but cultivate good and avoid ill. For the follower of Buddhism the doing of good is ineluctable, if he has understood their Masters teaching;

To avoid all evil,  
To cultivate good, and to cleanse one's mind  
This is the teaching of Buddhas.<sup>29</sup>

### Foot notes :

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# Administration of King Dharmapala: A study

Dipanjaly Barua Pinki

The Religious and cultural processes of King Dharmapala will be the main topic of this essay. The detailed discussion will be held later on. At this point there is an essential role for moralizing in the process. Moralizing is the mechanism for making one's values evident. The study of the process is the most important task with which, it is confronted may well sound presumptuous. The setting and implementation of cultural and religious process are such regular activities.

Dharmapala was a great king in India and his position was very high. Dharmapala, the son of Rasapala ascended the throne. He ruled for sixtyfour years. He conquered kimarupa, Tirahuti, Gauda and other places. Thus his empire was very large and his command was extended in the east up to the sea, in the west upto Dili<sup>1</sup> (Delhi), in the north up to Jalandara and in the south up to the heart of the vindhacala. Dharmapala was renown person and his fame was circulated to all over India.

He had given honor to his preceptors and was very kind to them. He accepted his preceptors Haribhadra and Jnanapada and filled all directions with the prajnaparamita and Sri Guhya- samaja. The panditas versed in the Guhya-Samaja and the Prajna-paramita were offered the highest seats of honour etc. Round about the period when this King ascended the throne. Siddhacarya Kukuri-pa<sup>2</sup> appeared in Bhangala and worked for the welfare of the living beings. His account is given elsewhere. Immediately after ascending the throne, the King invited the teachers of the Prajna-Paramita. He had great reverence for Haribhadra<sup>3</sup> in particular. This King built in all about fifty centers for the Doctrine, of which thirty five were centers for the study of the prajna-Paramita. He also built the Sri vikramasila<sup>4</sup>vihara. This monastery was famous in the India sub-continent.

Dharmapala had built somany Monasteries in Magadha. It was built in the north of Magadha on the bank of the Ganga on the top hillock.<sup>5</sup> The central temple in it had a human size statue of the Mahabodhi. Around it, there were fifty three smaller temple of Guhya Tantra and fifty four common temples. Thus he built (the monastery with) the total of one hundred and

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eight temples and the boundary walls. He lavishly provided with food and clothes for one hundred and fourteen persons, namely one hundred and eight Panditas and the Bali-acarya, Pratisthana – acarya, Homa-acarya, Musika-pala,<sup>6</sup> Kapota-pala and the supervisor of the Devadasa. For each of them he made provisions that was sufficient for four. Every month he organized a festival for these that listened to the Doctrine and also made excellent gifts to them. King Dharmapala was famous for his execution of work and was popular person.

The chief of this Centre was also to look after Nalendra. Each Pandita regularly explained there a special aspect of the Doctrine. Though there was no separate material provision for the different Centre, these in fact amounted to one hundred and eight Centre.

Dharmapala become more powerful than the previous king. His empire was extended to all sides of India. According to some, this King was an incarnation of acariya kambala-pa. But it is difficult to accept this. It is said that a certain master of the Pitaka, after attaining power through Prayer, was reborn as the king for the purpose of propagating the Prajna-paramita. Regarding the propagation of the Prajna-paramita since the time of this King, the Prajna-paramita was extensively propagated. Regarding the propagation of the Prajna-paramita sutra in the different regions, it was predicted<sup>7</sup> in it that this was to be propagated first in the Madhya-desa, then in the south, then again in the Madhyaya-desa, then in the north and from the north to the distant north of this prediction, the period of the spread from the south to the Madhya-desa again is to be identified as the period of this King. According to some, in the sutra itself was said that the Prajna-paramita was to be spread again in Madhya-desa after its spread in the north. Such a view is the result of not studying the sutras properly. During the time of king Dharmapala, Prajnaparamita was the main issue.

During the period of this King, western India was ruled by King Cakrayuda, which can be clearly seen in the brief inscription on the stone-pillar of Jaysena.

On a rough Calculation Dharmapala was a contemporary of the Tibetan King khri-sron-Lde-btson.<sup>8</sup>

So many great logicians had lived during the period of king Dharmapala. During the period of this King Dharmapalathere lived the great logician Kalyanagupta,<sup>9</sup> Haribhadra, Sundaravyuha,<sup>10</sup> Sagaramegha, <sup>11</sup>Prabhakara,<sup>12</sup> Purnavardhana,<sup>13</sup> the great Vajracarya Buddhajnanapada and his famous disciples, namely Buddhaguhya<sup>14</sup> and Buddhasanti<sup>15</sup> and, in Kashmir, acarya

Padmakaraghosa,<sup>16</sup> the logician Dharmakaradatta<sup>17</sup> and Simhamukha,<sup>18</sup> the expert in Vinaya. Among them now about Acarya Haribhadra is notable. The great logicians are also notable.

Dharmapala was born in the royal Family. His kingdom was extended all over India. He took up ordination though coming from a royal family and was a profound scholar in many sastras. He listened to the exposition of the Madhyamaka works from Acarya Santaraksita. From upadhaya Vairocanabhadra<sup>19</sup> he listened to the Prajna-paramita along with the Abhisamaya-alamkara-sastra-upadesa. After this, he propitiated Jina Ajita in the Khasapani forest in the east. He received his vision in dream and asked, There exist now many commentaries on the Prajna-paramita composed from different Philosophical view-pints. Which of these should be followed? He then received the permission : 'Compile those parts of these that are acceptable.' Prajna-paramita was the main thought in many sastras.

Shortly after this, King Dharmapala invited him. He lived in the Trikatuka monastery and preached the Prajna-paramitaito thousands of listeners. He composed many sastras like the Asta-sahasrika-maha-tika. He passed away more than twenty years after King Dharmapala ascended the throne.

Acarya Sagaramegha had a vision of Jina Ajita. It is said that being instructed by him to compose the commentary on the Yoga carya-bhumi in five sections, he composed a Commentary on the whole of it. However, his Commentary on the Bodhisattva-bhumi<sup>20</sup> is most famous. The Commentary on the yoga caryabhumi is another famous topic. Regarding Padmakaraghosa, I think he was the same as upadhya Lo dri.<sup>21</sup>

Mahacarya Buddhajnanapada was a reknown person and was the foremost disciple of Haribhadra. He attained Siddhi and started preaching the Doctrine round about the period when Haribhadra passed away. After some years, he became the King's preceptor. Shortly after this, he consecrated the Vikramsila (Monastery) and was appointed the Vajracarya there. Biginning with the time when this acarya started working for the welfare of the living beings and up to the time of his passing way, he used to receive every night seven hundred golden panas from aryagambala and three hundred Pearl necklaces from the goddess vasudhara. Buddhajnanapada attained Siddhi and preached the doctrine.

Buddhajnanapada was very intellectual and highly congradulated. By the grace of deities, every morning the buyer for those turned up. He used to spend before each evening all the money obtained therefrom in pious acts. He spent the time thus. He used to offer lamps as big as the chariot-wheel-



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seven each for the nineteenth deities of the Guhya-samaja and three each for the eight Bodhisattas and the six Krodhas. He used to offer fifteen naivedyas to the fifteen guardian of the horizons, each naivedya being raised by two men. He used similarly to offer many other articles of worship and to satisfy the disciples who listened to the Doctrine and the ordained monks and all sorts of supplicants. Thus he worked for the perpetual spread of the law. He had reverence for all the scholars. Buddhajnanapada was a famous person.

He told king Dharmapala, 'These are indications of the ruin of the dynasty during the rule of your grandson (tsha-bo), Perform the great homa so that the dynasty may last long and the Doctrine also may be extensively spread'.

Dharmapala was the great monarch in India and his empire was so big. Accordingly, got the home performed for many years by the Vajradhara with this acarya as their chief and offered during this articles worth nine lakh and two thousand lola- s of silver. He (the acarya) predicated to the king. Twelve of your successors will be kings and up to your fifth descendent in particular, many countries will be under their rule and the law also will be extensively spread.' This prediction came true. The details of his life are to be found elsewhere. King Dharmapala was the ruler of big Kingdom.

In a temple of Vajrasana there was then a large silver-image of Heruka<sup>22</sup> and many treatises on Tantra.<sup>23</sup> Some of the Sravako-Sendhava-s<sup>24</sup> of Singa Island (Ceylon) and other places said that these were composed by Mara.<sup>25</sup> So they burnt these and smashed the image into pieces and used the pieces as ordinary money.

Vikramsila was notable monastery in India and Bangladesh. Bangla people used to come to vikramasila for offering worship. (The Sravaka Sendhavas told them), 'That which is called Mahayana is only a source of livelihood for those who follow the wrong view. Therefore, Keep clear of these so-called preachers of the true Doctrine.' In this way, they used to draw people towards themselves. Later on, the King came to know all these and was about to punish the Singala islanders. But the acarya saved them at last. Vikramsila temple was the biggest in the Sub-continent.

Acarya had experienced in kri-yogas and tantras. He also explained in a limited form the three kri-yogas (Kriya-yagas). But he preached most extensively the five tantras of the insiders, namely the Samaja Mayajala, Buddha-samayoga, candra-guhya- tilaka and Manjusri-krodha. Special emphasis was put on the teachings of the Guhya-samaja and so it was very widely spread. Guhya-samaja was also notable.

The Acarya had a disciple called Prasantamitra.<sup>26</sup> Prasantamitra was a great scholar. He was known to all. He was an excellent pandita of the Abhidharma, Prajna-paramita and the three 'Kri-yogas. He lived at libitum.<sup>27</sup> But recognizing him as fortunate, Acarya Jnanapada conferred abhiseka on him, who, by meditation, received the vision of yamari and brought the powerful and malignant<sup>28</sup> yaksa under control, obtained from him whatever wealth he wanted and distributed it to the south of Nalanda a monastery called the Amrta kara.<sup>29</sup> At last he obtained the vidyadhara state in mortal body. Nalanda was famous in the Sub-continent.

Ksatriya Rahulabhadra studies in a centre of learning and received the degree of pandita. But he was not very sharp in intellect. The Acarya-Buddhajnanapada conferred abhiseka on him and blessed him. For a long time he practiced the Guhya-samaja on the bank of a river near the Sindhu in the west, attained the vision of Pancagotra Tathagata<sup>30</sup> and became a direct siddha of Guhyapati. He went to the Dravida country, instead of<sup>31</sup> working for the welfare of the living beings only in Jambudvipa. There he delivered many sermons on the Guhyatantra. He obtained wealth from the Nagas and from this he used to everyday a golden dinara as the daily wage to each of the five hundred workers employed in the construction of a temple. Ksatriya Rahulabhadda was a great Pandita. Thus he built a big temple of duhya-samaja. He attained the vidyadhara state in the mortal body and entered the sea to subdue the Nagas. He still lives there.

Acarya Buddhaguhya and Buddhasanti were disciples of Acarya Buddha jnanapada during the first part of his life. They listened to many guhya-mantras in general from the acarya himself and from many other Vajradharas. They become special adepts in the three Tantras of kriya, carya and yoga and attained Siddhi in the yoga-tantra.

Acarya Buddhajnanapada had gained consciousness and his body is free from all discass. He propitiated Arya Manjusri some were in varanasi. As a result, the picture of the deity smiled. The article for the siddhi-namely ghee from red and yellow cows-started boiling. The withered flowers blossomed again. So he know these as marks of approaching siddhi. But he remained hesitant for a while, thinking whether first to swallow the ghee or offer the flowers. At that moment, a yaksini causing obstruction slapped on the face of acarya, which made him unconscious for a little while. On regaining consciousness, he saw the picture of the deity covered with dust, the flowers withered and the ghee spilt on the ground. He wiped off the dust, put the flowers on the head of the image and swallowed the ghee that remained. This made his body free from all diseases, light and strong. Also his intellect

becomes sharp and he was enclosed with abhijnana. Acariya Buddhajnanapada is free from all diseases. Without the aid of these articles and the picture of the deity, by meditation alone Buddhasanti attained the same qualities as Buddhaguhya.

Then the two together went to the Potala hill. At the foot of the hill, arya Tara sat preaching the Doctrine to the Nagas. But they saw only an old woman tending a big herd of cows. When they reached the middle of the hill, the goddess Boruti was preaching the Doctrine to the group of Asuras and Yaksas. But they saw a girl tending a big herd of goats and sheep. When they reached the top of the hill, there was nothing but a stone image of Arya Avaloketasvara. Thus it is said. At the foot of the patala hill, arya Tara sat preaching the Doctrine to the Nagas.

But Buddhasanti thought, 'why should this place be full of such trivial object? So all these are due to the defects of my vision. They must be Tara and others'. With this deep conviction, he earnestly prayed to them. Thus he acquired as the general quality the miraculous power of transforming anything at will and also the extraordinary quality of boundless abhijnana and with this he learnt all the Sastras that he never studied before. He realised the nature of everything as but void (literally), like the Akasa.

But Buddhaguhya was powerful and he prayed with no such conviction and he attained only the miraculous power of moving without his feet touching the earth. Then the old woman instructed him, 'Go to the Ti-se (Kailasa) of the Himalayas and meditate there.' Buddhaguhya had miraculous power. Buddhasanti had attained greater siddhi for the welfare of himself and others.

On their way back<sup>32</sup> from patala, he asked Buddhasanti, 'what sort of siddhi did you attain? Buddhasanti told him all that had happened. He felt somewhat jealous to know that his companion had attained greater siddhi. Immediately he lost even the siddhi of moving without touching the earth. It is said that after explaining for it for a long time, he regained the siddhi. Then he preached the Doctrine for a few years at varanasi and being instructed by arya Manjusri as before, he went to the mount Tise<sup>33</sup> meditated there and had the repeated vision of vajradhatu-maha-mandala.<sup>34</sup> He could even speak with Arya Manjusri personally as it were. Buddhasanti had attained greater siddhi. He employed all the sub-human beings to his service and acquired the power of karma-sambhara<sup>35</sup> and the sadharana siddhi-s.

Buddhaguhya was one of the powerful authority and was a great scholar. At that time, the tibetan king khri- sron-de-btsan sent Manjusri of dbus<sup>36</sup> and other to invite Buddhaguhya. But he did not go there, because the permission for this was refused by the God-Manjusri.<sup>37</sup> So he preached to

them (i.e. Tibetans) the three kri-yogas (kriya-yogas). He composed the vajra-dhatu-yogavatara,<sup>38</sup> vairocana-abhisambodhi-tantra-tika<sup>39</sup> and the Dhyantottara-patala-tika.<sup>40</sup> Buddhaguya was one of the powerful authority and was a great person.

These are many brief commentaries on his writings, though he did not attain the parama-siddhi, his body became invisible. Though it is said that Buddhasanti also lived in Ti-se, it is clear that he went to uргyana. Evidently, acaryakamalasila<sup>41</sup> also lived during the period of this king. Therefore, he do not consider him as prior or posterior to this king.

## References :

1. V Tili, as occurring in S-ed. P-ed Dili.
2. V & S Kukura. VnKukura or Kukkura (ku-khu-ri-pa) was a brahmin in the kingdom of kapila-bhargu. He attained Sadharana siddhi and was among the 33 gods. The bitch reared up by him, after becoming a da kini advised to attain parama-siddhi and he combined art with spiritual power.
3. S. Simhabhadra.
4. S n 'with noteworthy tenacity, the Tibetans retain the form Vikrama-sila and I have allowed this form to remain in my text.
5. Magadha-i- byain-nos ('North of Magadha'). V. tr. 'on the top of a hill on the northern bank of the river Ganga'.
6. P-edleyi-ba-srun-ba (leyi-ba= mouse). S-edbya – ba-bsrun – ba (bya-ba = instruction). S tr. 'the protector of duties (or instructions)'. V. tr. Protector (from)of mice'. Vn 'I have read byi-ba-srun-ba. S reads bya-ba-bsrun-ba.
7. S tr 'in the chapter on the bhumi-pariksana of the prajna-paramita sutra it was predicted-'vtr in the Prajana- paramita sutra it was predicted-'
8. Petech in I H G supplement xiii, xv, 77-82 gives the date of this Tibetan king as A D. 755-797. Cf. Achattopadhyaya A T 212 ff& 250 ff.
9. Dge-srun. See Supplementary Note 58.
10. Mdses-bkod. Tg contains Gathadvaya-vyakhyana (M D O xxx vii.5) by him, a commentary on kg MDo vol. pa xiii 2.
11. Rgya-mtsho-sprin
12. 'Od-zer. See Supplementary Note 59.
13. Gan-ba-spel (ba). Tg contains a commentary on Abhidharmakosa (mdo-Lxvii-Lxviii) and an abridged version of the same (M D O Lxx. 3) attributed to him.
14. Sans-rgyas-gsan-ba. See Supplementary Note 60.
15. Sans-rgyas-shi-la. Tg. Contains Desanastava-vriti (bs Tod 49) attributed to him.
16. Padma-'byun- gnas-dhyasis. In TgBhiksu- varsagrap-rccha (m Do xc. 21) is attributed to Padmakaraghosa, though it is usually considered to be a work of Padmasambhava-su Roerich BA. i. 30n & abermiller Bu-ston ii. Intro 4.
17. Chos'-byun-byin, vidyabhusana HIL 329- he was a disciple of Dharmakaradatta of Kashmir and of kalyanaraksita.

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18. Sen-ge-gdon-can. Bu-Ston ii. 161 doubts the tradition according to which he was a disciple of Sakyaprabha.
19. Rnam-snan-mdsad-bzan-po. See Supplementary Note 61
20. Vn : 'This work of Sagarmegha is available in Tg. Boddhisattva-bhumi is the second part (the first part being Sravaks-bhumi) of the first of the five divisions of the yoga-arya- bhumi and contains 6, 750 slokas. It is partly identical with Sutralamkara. It expounds : 1) about the traditions of peoples, 2) about the origin of thought, 3) causing welfare to self and others, 4) about the value of the absolute, 5) about Buddha and his doctrine, 6) about perfection, 7) about Bodhi, 8) about powers, 9) about the six paramitas, each examined in nine ways.
21. Lo-dri = varsa-preecha. As author of Bhiksu-varsagraprecha (See note 16 above), padmakaraghosa is also referred to as upadhaya Lo-dri.
22. Shing (one). V tr. 'large silver images of Heruka.'
23. Snags (mantra or tantra). V tr. 'many secret treatises'.
24. D1276-sendhava, probably Tibetanised form of the word 'siddha'.
25. Chag lo-tsa-ba (Roerich Sw 531 f) also found the predominance of the Sravakas in vajrasana.
26. Rab-shi -bses-gaen. Tg contains three Tantrika works by him-rG xxv. 3, Lvi, Lvi.4
27. Ci-bder-gnas pa. D 381-placed as they liked, name of a section of Tantric Buddhists in the monastery of Vikramsila during Atisa's time. V. he lived calmly.
28. S-ednod-nas (pitcher). P-edgnod-gnas (malignant). S. tr. attained control over all the treasures of the yaksas with excellent wealth.'
29. Bdud-rtis'i-byun-gnas, lit. 'The source of sector.'
30. De-lbshin-gsegs-pa-rigs-lna. VniVairocana, Aksobhya, Amitabha, Ratnakara, Amoghasiddhi.'
31. Cher-ma-mdsad, lit. 'not working extensively.' s. tr. 'He extensively worked for the welfare of the living beings in Jambudvipa.'
32. Tshur-'ons-pa-na, lit. 'on the way back'. S tr. 'reaching there.'
33. One of Buddhaguhya's work (rGLxiii. 238) is said to have been Composed in the Himalaya.
34. rdo-rje-dhyins (vajradhatu-see Tg. rGLvii. 1 & Li 2), Dharmadhatu.
35. Las-tsongs. V & S Kriya-gana.
36. DBus, ie. Central Tibet.
37. Tg contains Bhota-svami-dasa-lekho (MDO XCiv.39), a letter sent by Buddhaguhya to Khri-sron-Lde-Btson, the King of Tibet and his subjects, the Tibetan devotees.
38. No work exactly with this title is traced in Tg-see Supplementary note 60.
39. Tgrc Lxiv.1 and its auto-commentary rG Lxiv.2
40. RGLxvi, i.
41. See Supplementary Note 62.

# **Tibetan Buddhist Monastic Libraries in Darjeeling District : A Brief Review**

**Swapna Banerjee\***

**Soumen Kayal\*\***

## **I. Introduction**

Darjeeling, Written in Tibetan as 'Dorje Ling' (Dorji-thunderbolt, Ling-Place) is one of the most magnificent hill regions of the Eastern Himalayas. It was the name of a Buddhist monastery which once stood a top observatory Hill, around which Darjeeling grew. In Sanskrit, the name is derived from the word 'Durjay Ling', meaning Siva of invincible prowess, who rules the Himalayas. It is one of the districts of West Bengal, comprising of four subdivisions of Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Kurseong hills and the Siliguri. The district is located in the northern most part of West Bengal and is bordered by Sikkim in North, Bhutan in East, Nepal in West, and the districts of Jalpaiguri and Purnea (Bihar) in South. The district consists of a portion of outlying hills of the lower Himalayas, and a stretch of territory lying along the base of the hills, known as Tarai. The attitude ranges from 300 feet (Tarai) to 12,000 feet in the Hills. Darjeeling has got a mixed population of Nepalese, Lepchas, Bhutias, Bengali, Biharis and others. The total population of the district according to 2011 census is 18, 42,034, of which 9, 34,796 are male and 9, 07,238 are females. Among them the hill areas consist of pulation of about 7, 87,939.

The city of Darjeeling boasts of an interesting cultural and religious diversity. People of several religions and cultures live here in peace and harmony. The architecture culture, cuisines, costumes of Darjeeling reflects Buddhist influence to quite an extent. Darjeeling has a long association with this religion and this is evident in the large number of Buddhist monasteries established there.

One of theocio culture characteristics of the three hill subdivisions of Darjeeling district viz. Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Kurseong is the abundance of Buddhist monasteries. These monasteries have been constructed over a

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long period of the time from 18<sup>th</sup> century to as late as 1997. There are many new and old, big and small Tibetan monasteries, and these monasteries are to be found in almost all the towns and even the villages in the corners of the hill. A tour to Darjeeling is incomplete without a visit to these monasteries.

Monasteries are the most important social institutions in historical Darjeeling district. Monasteries are complex social institutions functioning as schools, vocational training centers, local governments, libraries, publishers, museums, ritual services providers, pilgrimage sites, and medical clinics. Externally, monasteries often had complex relationships to other religious institutions based on sectarian affiliation, or closer relationships of “mother” and “son’/branch” institutions.

### **2. Monasteries: The origin**

There have been a lot of influxes of Tibetan refugees into Darjeeling over the years who are mostly Buddhists. Several wonderful monasteries also have come up in Darjeeling over time, some date back to 1800s. The Chogyar Namgyal established the first monastery known as the Dubdi Monastery in 1701, at Yuksomin, Sikkim, founded by Lhatsun Namkha Jigme and since then monasteries have been constructed almost regularly for nearly a period of 300 years. Because Darjeeling was a part of Sikkim, it is only likely that monasteries in Darjeeling were built after 1701.

There are two old monasteries in Darjeeling town - one in the Bhutia Bustee monastery and another in Ging monastery, which are said to have been affiliated to the phodong and pemayangtse monasteries of Sikkim, belonging to Karma sects respectively. The tentative dates of their inauguration are 1765 and 1818 respectively. The Bhutia Bustee monastery was sacked by a Gorkha invasion in 1815. It was rebuilt in 1861, and was moved to its present location in Bhutia Busty in 1879.

The first Lepcha monastery of the region was founded in 1690 in Durpin in Kalimpong town. The monastery used to be quite active till 1865, when after the Bhutan War the British authority was extended to the region.

Many monasteries were established in Darjeeling in course of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The famous by a Mongolian monk in the 1875s. Majority of the other monasteries in Darjeeling region are said to have been founded later. Among them are - Alubari monastery of the yolmos-1915, Kursong Gelugpa monaster-1919, Tripai Gelugpa monastery in Kalimpong-1925, Ghoom Gelugpa monastery-1952, Sherpa monastery in Sonada-1952 etc.

There are numerous tamang monasteries in almost all towns of Darjeeling districts under the management of the local Tamang Buddhist Associations. These have been constructed throughout the century.

Monastery building activities were accelerated after 1950s, when the Tibetan refugees and some high lamas of Tibet started arriving in India in thousands after the Chinese takeover in 1959. To this category, belong monasteries of almost all the sects of Tibetan Buddhism. Among them are the Karmapa monasteries of Kalu Rinpoche in Sonada-1966, Bokar Rinpoche's monastery in Mirik-1983, the Lava monastery of Jamgen kotrul Rinpoche-1988, the Dali monastery of Drukpa Kagyu sect and the Sakya Guru monastery of Trizin Rinpoche in Ghoom.

### **3. Nature of Tibetan monasteries and Monastic libraries**

The term ‘monastery’ has been derived from the Greek word ‘monasterion’, which means the habitat and workplace of a community of monks or nuns. In Buddhism, a monastery is known as a vihara or gonpa.

In Darjeeling District, there are numerous Tibetan monasteries, and libraries are attached of these monasteries also. These libraries have always been precious and valuable repositories of human knowledge and achievement, since man learnt to live in a society. They quite often have housed collections of the oldest written records, which, due to their uniqueness, are of priceless historical value. They played an important role in Buddhist education and culture in the society. These libraries, organized by the Buddhist communities, play remarkable role in the dissemination of information on Tibetan Buddhist studies in world.

Monastic libraries are special type of libraries. Special libraries are distinguished from special collections, which are branches or parts of a library intended for rare books, manuscripts, and other special materials, though some special libraries have special collections of their own, typically related to the library's specialized subject area. All the monastic libraries have good collection of books. Restoration and preservation of texts of their particular sects are also on their agenda.

Monastic library is a social institution; these institutions offer an alternative, traditional approach to education and they preserve and promote Buddhist culture. Although there are different forms of Buddhism teachings, in general, a monastic education attempts to offer an appreciation of life and simple moments of being, and of preserving a sense of self for self-knowledge and acceptance.



## **Tibetan Buddhist Monastic Libraries in Darjeeling District : a brief review**

Monasteries are centres of learning activities in the local communities, and libraries of monasteries support community education, and should provide information services to attract people, and revive the monastic role as the centres of the community.

The Tibetan monasteries have their own system of training and higher education, as well as some foreign connections (as in the case of four monasteries in Ghoom, Tripai, Pedong and Kalimpong as their Rinpoche has set up centres in America and elsewhere in world), but they lack the organisational skill and of course the financial resources. Most of these monasteries also encourage pursuit of higher studies by their monks, and monastic libraries *sett* play the significant role for different kind of purposes. These libraries provide different kind of resources and services for spreading of Buddhist culture and knowledge in society. The monastic libraries are the chief centres of learning, practice and propagation of Buddhist religion.

Textual activity in Buddhism has mainly been performed by monastic libraries. Besides pastoral care, their roles include meditation and preserving the teaching: studying, expounding, reproducing, writing, among other exercises. Medieval monastic culture promoted these same roles. Pedagogically, different Buddhist schools emphasise one or more of these roles. Their discernment provides a context for education and textual collections. Additionally, important exegetical literature has been produced by academics and lay people, who have adopted some monastic activities.

### **4. Information Resources of Monastic Librararies**

In Darjeeling, most of the monastic library contains good collection of books from all parts of the world, written by various well-known Buddhist Scholars and writers. The monks are encouraged to study these books and to do research on the Pali canon, Tripataka, and in other Buddhist fields, i.e., Buddhist History, Culture, Civilization, Traditions etc.

Since the introduction of Buddhism in Darjeeling, Buddhist monks are the principal custodians of educational activities. Elementary education is provided at the village temples while an advanced education is provided at the better monastic complexes.

Libraries in Buddhist environments mainly develop reference services. They exist to provide information, mostly primary sources, scriptures and exegetical work, to residents and visitors, among other subjects of interest. Many monastic libraries are also used as repository of material produced by the centre or teachers attached to the lineage. This material generally takes

the form of periodicals, books, seminars, talks, and its transcripts, be it in a document and/or an audio format. Most Buddhist centres place great emphasis on their own tradition and prioritise their own sources. It can then be said that most libraries in Darjeeling show a collection bias towards the teaching of their own lineage. Collection policies are geared towards this effort, which in some cases justify the presence of the library.

Most of the monastic libraries have small number of printed material; they own palm leaves manuscripts, Buddhist scroll painting, old written documents, philosophy books, Nepali books, religious books, historical books, scriptorium and English literature. These libraries provided reading services for monks and local people.

Printed books predominate in Buddhist monastic libraries, and form their main asset. This is followed by periodicals, which are collected sporadically, and many times remain unrecorded. Audio CDs are a particular favoured medium in monastic libraries, as are electronic files, mainly with audio content, in monastic environments and in centres with strong lineage bias. Contrasting book stock with other formats shows that libraries with the largest amount of books not only tend to be better organised, but also hold more titles and better kept stock of journals.

Acquisition is almost always conducted by donations, with some libraries purchasing new items and very few subscribing to other resources. Libraries then depend on donations by religious and members of the congregation for its growth. Most centres announce which items are required. These are either donated, a token given towards their purchase, or especially acquired by a donor. In these cases, these items generally include a dedication.

## **5. Monastic libraries: Preservation aspect**

The traditional monastic libraries were magical sanctuaries that enveloped with their unique atmosphere, and libraries traditionally served as primary information centers for generation and preservation of Buddhist culture, both material and intellectual. In Darjeeling, most of the monastic libraries are equipped with rich collection of Buddhist religious texts and manuscripts. All the manuscripts are in Tibetan language. The manuscript wrapping technique gives twofold protection to the manuscript, firstly it protects manuscripts from direct exposure to the environmental agents like dust, dirt, pollutants and moisture; secondly red colour act as insect replant. All the collections are arranged separately category wise as per their preservation priorities. Manuscripts are kept in wooden almirahs with front glass doors.

## **Tibetan Buddhist Monastic Libraries in Darjeeling District : a brief review**

Another interesting point to be mentioned is that any chemical are not used for preservation.

### **6. Buddhist monastic libraries at glance**

Let us explore some popular Buddhist monasteries libraries in the Darjeeling town of West Bengal.

#### **6.1 Yiga choeling Ghoom old Monastery**

Yiga Choling Buddhist Monastery is located at about 8 kilometres from Darjeeling and is located at an altitude of 8000 feet above sea level. The Yiga Choling Buddhist Monastery was built in 1875 by the Lama Sherab Gyantso. This is the largest of the three monasteries in the Ghoom area. Among the Buddha texts available here, are the Kangyur, the Buddhist Tibetan Gospel running into 108 volumes.

#### **6.2 Sakya Guru Monastery**

Sakya Guru Monastery is located eight kilometers from Darjeeling, in the little town of Ghoom. This monastery was established in December 17, 1909. The monastery was officially inaugurated by His Holiness the Sakya Trizin. The monastery has a library with a rich collection of Buddhist religious texts. All the manuscripts are in tibetan language. There in the center of the monastery is the old temple, which houses three great statues of Buddha, Shakyamuni and Avalokitesvara, who are sitting on both sides of the central Guru Padmasambhava, the name-bestower of the monastery. An interesting feature is that there are the manuscripts of 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D., which are written on handmade paper.

#### **6.3 Santen Choling Buddhist Monastery**

This Monastery was founded by Domo Geshe Rinpoche. Located in Ghum and about 7km from the Darjeeling town, Samten Choling is also another prominent Buddhist monastery in the Darjeeling area. Sometimes the locals refer to this one also as the Ghum monastery.

#### **6.4 Druk sangag Choling Monastery (Dali Monastery)**

This is one of the largest monasteries located at a place called Dali which is 5 kms away from Darjeeling. It was built during the time of Kyabje Thuksey Rimpoche in 1971. The monastery belongs to the Kargyupa Sect. Currently there are around 200 monks and disciples from the nearby Himalayan region who live and study in the monastery. This monastery houses the largest monastery library. This library containing Buddhist

scriptures and other literary works on the philosophy of life is present inside. It has a large collection of about 10,000 religious texts. These libraries have an important collection, that is, Prajnaparamita, which is bounded in a wooden frame, and broad words were inscribed on it. This library is open for all kinds of users.

#### **6.5 Mag-Dhog Yolomowa Buddhist Monastery (Alubari Monastery)**

At a distance of some three kilometers from Chowrasta, in the village of Aloobari on the Eastern incline of Jalapahar hill, stands the Yolomowa Buddhist Monastery (it is also known as Alubari Monastery). The Monastery was built by Sri Sangay Lama in, a highly revered religious head of the Yolomo, a small ethnic group hailing from northeast of Nepal and later scattered in Darjeeling. The Monastery is self-supported. The monastery which belongs to the Nyingma Zogchen tradition, is a religious centre open to all Buddhist Communities. It is also a place of great interest for Students of Buddhist History, Philosophy, Art, paintings and literature. This monastery has some collections of Buddhist religious text and Manuscript and also has a small library. But this monastery was partially again damaged during the last earthquake of 2011. Many valuable ancient scriptures can be found inside this monastic library.

#### **6.6 Bokar Ngedon Chokhor Ling Monastery (Mirik Monastery)**

In general, a monastery is a place where the teaching of Buddhism can be studied, practiced, and preserved. At Bokar monastery the monks engage in a full schedule of both practice and study. This monastery was founded by Lama Kyabje Bokar Rinpoche in 1983. Inside of it is a primary school and library. The young monks attend daily classes in Tibetan language, grammar, and hand writing. Monks are visiting this library on a daily routine basis, and consult the library resources for their education purposes.

#### **6.7 Samdrub Darjay Choling Monastery (Sonada Monastery)**

In 1966, the venerable Kabje Kalu Rinpoche established this Monastery in Sonada, Darjeeling (also known as Sonada Monastery). There are several monasteries, meditation centers and religious institutions established by Kalu Rinpoche around the world.

#### **6.8 Hogmin ngayab Zangdok palri Phodang Tsenpo (Durpin Monastery)**

Durpin Monastery (also known as Hogmin ngayab Zangdok palri Phodang Tsenpo) is located at the Durpin Dara Hill under Kalimpong

## **Tibetan Buddhist Monastic Libraries in Darjeeling District : a brief review**

subdivision. Durpin monastery was established in 1946 by Hon. Dudjum Rimponche. Presently this monastery is run by Sherpa Community, and belongs to the Nigmapa sect. There are rare Buddhist manuscripts on Tibetology inside, called “The Kangyur” of 108 volumes. These were presented by Dalai Lama when he visited Kalimpong in 1956. He brought them from Tibet.

### **6.9 Lava Kagya Thekchen ling Monastery (Lava Monastery)**

This monastery was established by Karma Lodro Chokyi Senge, the third Kongtrul Rimpoche in 1988 near Lava Bazar. This monastery belongs to the kagyupa sect. At present, among the 130 monks at Kagyu Thekchen Ling, 110 are pursuing the 13-year Acharya programme at its centre for higher Buddhist philosophy, the Rigpe Dorje Institute. This monastic Library contains the largest collection of precious manuscripts and books outside Tibet.

## **7. Conclusions**

In conclusion, it may be said that the monastery is the first and foremost among and most important of any kind of institutions in hill area of Darjeeling district. The Buddhist monastery has traditionally served as a primary locus for the generation and preservation of Tibetan culture, both material and intellectual. They performed as the pivot of many functions; both religious and social, for a long period, and monastic libraries are the important centers of cultural traditions and carry on priceless treasures of legacy. They are the repositories of priceless heritage, and whose importance can never decrease in any way.

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# **Concept of the Buddha Amitabha and his paradise Sukhavati**

**(A General Study for the Beginners)**

**Jayanti Chatterjee**

I, Amitabha, literal meaning of which is Infinite Light'. He is also called Amitayus (of Infinite Life) and Amida, Amita and 'A Di Da'. Amitabha, Amitayus etc. are the various names of the Buddha Amitabha. Amitabha is the most commonly used name for the Buddha of Infinite Light and Infinite Life. Amitabha is the transhistorical Buddha venerated by all Mahayana Schools and particularly, Pure Land. Amitabha presides over the Western Pure Land (Land of Ultimate Bliss) or Sukhavati, where anyone can be reborn through utterly sincere (i.e. single-minded) recitation of his name, particularly at the time of death. Amitabha Buddha at the highest or noumenon level represents the True Mind, the Self-Nature common to the Buddhas and sentient beings - all - encompassing and all - inclusive. This deeper understanding provides the rationale for the harmonization of Zen and Pure Land, two of the most popular schools of Mahayana Buddhism in Japan.

Amitabha Buddha is regarded as the Fourth of the Dhyani Buddhas. He is the personification of Compassion (=Karuna or Mahakaruna). In the Pure Land schools of China and Japan, Amitabha is the intermediary between Supreme Reality and Mankind, and faith in him ensure rebirth in his paradise (i.e. Sukhavati). Symbolically, Amitabha is Higher Self (or Self Nature.) and rebirth into his paradise is the awakening of the Bodhicitta (=Bodhi-Mind) in the heart of man. <sup>1</sup>

As personification of infinite mercy, compassion and wisdom, the figure of Amitabha became the supreme object of devotion and faith in the Pure Land schools which developed in China and Japan, and other Asian countries. About the middle of the 7<sup>th</sup> century in China, Amitabha replaced Sakyamuni and Maitreya as the supreme of popular devotion. Associated with Amitabha were the two great Bodhisattas: Mahasthamaprapta and Avalokitesvara.<sup>2</sup>

## **II. ORIGIN OF THE PREVIOUS HISTORY OF THE BUDDHA AMITABHA**

What we learn from the Larger Sukhavativyuha, one of the three Pure Land Sutras, is as follows :

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The Sutra i.e. the Larger or Longer Sukhavativyuha, describes discourse offered by the Buddha Sakyamuni ... in response to questions of his disciple Ananda. Sakyamuni tells the story of the Bodhisattva Dharmakara, who had for aeons past had been deeply moved by the suffering of sentient beings and who had determined to establish a Land of Bliss where all beings could experience emancipation from their pains. In the presence of the eighty-first Buddha of the past, Lokeshvararaja, Dharmakara, then a bhikkhu, made forty-eight vows relating to this Land of Bliss (paradise-Sukhavati), and promised that he would not accept Enlightenment if he could not achieve his goals. When after countless ages, Dharmakara bhikkhu achieved enlightenment and became a Buddha, the conditions of his 18<sup>th</sup> vow<sup>3</sup> were fulfilled : He became the Lord of Sukhavati, the Western Paradise, where the faithful will be reborn in bliss, there to progress through stages of increasing awareness until they finally achieve enlightenment.

It is said further in the Sutra that Rebirth in Sukhavati is available to those who (1) make a vow to be reborn there, (2) employ their good merit and virtues to do so, and meditate on Amitabha, or recite his name.

### III. SUKHAVATI :

“Sukhavati” is a concept absolutely of the Mahayana, founded by Hui-Yuan (334-416 A.D) in China in the Chin Dynasty (4<sup>th</sup> -5<sup>th</sup> cent.). Next to Hui-Yuan, Tan-Luan (475-542 A.D) is the most important figure in the Chinese Pure Land movement. He is also regarded as the First Patriarch of the Pure Land School. After a long time of its origin and growth in China it came to Japan in 1175 through Honen Shonin (1133-1212 A.D) who founded the JODO Sect and developed during Shinran (1175 -1262) who founded the JODO-SHIN Sect and Ippen (1239-1289) who founded the JI Sect. Now this is the most popular faith in Japan. In Japan today more than half of the Buddhists belong to the Pure Realm Sects, some 18,500,000 people — of these seventy percent are Shin Buddhists, sixteen percent are Jodo Buddhists, the rest belong to the sects known as Seizan, Ji, Yuzu Nembutsu and Shensei.<sup>4</sup>

“Sukhavati”, literally “the Blissful”, the so-called “Western Paradise”, “the Pure Land of the West”, one of the most important of the Buddha-fields to appear in the Mahayana. It is reigned over by the Buddha Amitabha, who created it by his karmic merit. Through faithful devotion to Amitabha and through recitation of his name one can be reborn there and lead a blissful life until entering final Nirvana.

Amitabha's land is called “Sukhavati” because those living there are: free of afflictions and enjoy the supreme bliss of Nirvana. His land, usually called “the Pure Land”, is the reward for the long course of practice which



## Concept of the Buddha Amitabha and his paradise Sukhavati

he performed when he was a Bodhisattva called “Dharmakara” (meaning Dharma-store). Although its glorious splendour is described in physical terms in the Sutras, this land is above all forms and concepts. It is the sphere of pure spiritual activity; those born there are awakened to the ultimate reality, and compassion spontaneously arises in them. In other words, having become Bodhisattvas, they participate in Amitabha’s endless works of delivering beings from delusions and sufferings.<sup>5</sup>

According to the Larger Sukhavati-vyūha Sutra, the Western Pure Land is ten billions Buddha-lands away from our SAHA world-realm. How can the common ordinary people who are weak and frail can reach the Western Pure Land? Answer is given : The Western Pure Land is described as being ten billions of Buddha-lands away from here only with respect to the limited concepts of ordinary people with eyes of flesh and blood, mired in birth and Death. For those who have attained the pure Karma or rebirth in the Pure Land, and Mind in Samadhi at the time of death is precisely the Mind reborn in the Pure Land. As soon as thought of rebirth arises, rebirth is achieved. Thus the Meditation Sutra states that “the Land of Amitabha Buddha is not far from here. Moreover, the power of Karma is inconceivable. In the space of one thought, rebirth in the Pure Land is achieved. There is no need to worry about distance. This is analogous to person asleep and dreaming. Although his body is on the bed, his mind is travelling all over, to all worlds, as though he were awake. Rebirth in the Pure Land is, generally speaking, similar to this example.”<sup>6</sup>

### IV. SCRIPTURES OF THE SUKHAVATI :

The concept of the Amitabha Buddha and his teachings are taught or mentioned in various Sutras. But the teachings of the Pure Land (or the Pure Realm)<sup>7</sup> as the Buddha-land of Amitabha Buddha are chiefly based on the following scriptures :

1. The Smaller Sukhavati Sutra
2. The Larger Sukhavati Sutra
3. The Amitayurdhyana-Sutra.

The Smaller Sukhavati Sutra must be the oldest one. Being short, it has few clues to the date of its compilation, but probably it must have been written at a very early time.<sup>8</sup> Accordingly to some scholar the prototype of the Smaller Sukhavati Sutra was composed around the first century B.C. This Sutra teaches anyone who merely hears the name of Amitayus (=Amitabha) and thinks of it at the hour of death will be received by Amitabha to be born in the blessed land’, and that faith in that Buddha should be cherished.

As the causes for the birth in the Pure Land the Bodhi-mind, hearing of

the name of Amitabha Buddha, directing one's thought toward Amitabha and planting roots of goodness are mentioned in all the Sukhavati-sutras. Throughout all Pure Land Scriptures of India, meditation upon Amitabha Buddha (Buddhanusmṛti) was the essential practice. However, Shan-tao or China interpreted it as meaning 'innovation to him by repeating his name.' Since then, this interpretation has been subscribed to by most Chinese and Japanese Pure Land Buddhists. The all-embracing, compassionate character of Amitabha was most appealing to Northern Buddhists. He is said to have made 48 vows to save living beings from sufferings, when he as a monk called Dharmakara in the past lives. However, the so-called 18<sup>th</sup> Vow<sup>9</sup> has been most esteemed by the Jodo Shinshu sect of Japan.

In his Encyclopaedia of Buddhism, Vol. I, Dr. G.P. Malalasekera quotes a Japanese author who found two hundred texts referring to Amitabha Buddha and his Pure Land (N.B. thirty-one of them are in Sanskrit). It is interesting to note that the author of the Tathagatagarbha (i.e. Treatise on the Buddha-womb Theory) concludes his highly technical work on the Tathagatagarbha Jootrine by stating : 'By the merit I have acquired through writing this Treatise, may all beings come to perceive the Buddha Amitabha endowed with Infinite Light.' Such reference attests to the influence wielded by Pure Land thought in the devotional lives of the commentators.

## **V. MAJOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO SUTRAS : SMALLER SUKHAVATI-VYUHASUTRA AND THE LARGER SUKHAVATI-VYUHASUTRA :**

The major differences between the two Sutras lies in the fact that the Smaller Sukhavativyuha-sutra preaches salvation through Faith and the recitation of Amida's name (N.B. in Japan Amitabha Buddha is popularly known as Amida-Butsu) 'Nembutsu' rather than through works, whereas the larger Sukhavativyuha-sutra does not wholly reject good works as aids to salvation, although it does not make provision in the Pure Land for anyone who has committed a deadly sin, even though that sinner may experience conversion. It has been mentioned that Amitabha Buddha has great affinities (causes and conditions) with this (SAHA) world. The Larger Sukhavativyuha-sutra states: "In the Dharma-Ending Age, when all other Sutras will be disappeared, only this Sutra will remain for another hundred years to rescue sentient being and lead them to the Western Pure Land.

## **VI. SUBSTANCE OF THE LARGER SUKHAVATIVYUHA : <sup>10</sup>**

"Sakyamuni appears in Rajagriha on the Gridhrakuta hill, surrounded by thousands of monks, disciples and Bodhisattvas. In conversation with Ananda, he enumerates 81 Buddhas of the past. The last of these, named

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Lokesvararaja, instructs the monk Dharmakara regarding the perfections of the Buddha-Lands. It is this Dharmakara who, by prayers (=pranidhana) in a former life, and by faithfully practising the virtues of a Bodhisattva through countless aeons, was reborn in the Sukhavati world in the West as Buddha Amitabha. There he radiates immeasurable light (hence his name Amitabha) and his span of life immeasurable (hence other name Amitayus). In this "Buddha-land", the Sukhavati paradise, there is neither hell nor animal birth, nor Pretas, nor Asuras. This blessed land is filled with infinite fragrance. There grows tree of precious stones in many hundred thousand colours and equally marvellous lotus flowers. There are no mountains but the land is a plain like the palm of the hand. Charming rivulets supply lovely sweet water and their splashing makes the most lovely music.

The creatures that are born in the Sukhavati are provided with the most fascinating qualities of body and mind and enjoy all the delights which they have only to wish for. There is no difference between men and gods. There is no such thing as day and night. There is no darkness. Amitabha is continuously praised and he who bethinks himself of the growth of his good deeds, he who turn his thoughts to enlightenment, and he who devoutly prays to be born in that world, to him Amitabha appears in the hour of his death and the aspirant sees the light again in the Land of Bliss. Nay, even those who think of Amitabha with a single thought are born there. But the creatures in the Sukhavati are not born of woman. They come into being (as Aupapadika sattva) seated on lotus flowers when they have firmly believed in Amitabha or so adhering to the chalice of a lotus when their faith is not sufficiently firm.

There is no doubt that the larger Sukhavativyuha-sutra was in existence before 200 A.D. According to some scholars this Sutra was compiled 100 years prior to Nagarjuna. It is presumed that this Sutra was compiled in the age of the Kushana Dynasty, i.e. the first and second centuries A.D., by an Orier of the Mahisasaka Bhikkhus which flourished in the Gandhara region. It is likely that the Larger Sukhavati-vyuha-sutra owed greatly to the Lokottaravadins for its compilation. In the Sutra there can be found many elements in common with the Mahavastu-Avadana. This Sutra was composed after the pattern of Avadanas.<sup>11</sup>

It is likely that the original of the Larger Sukhavati-vyuha-sutra was brought to China by Sanghavarman may have been written in Gandhari or any other Prakrit similar to it. The Chinese translation of the Larger Sukhavati-vyuha-sutra by Sanghavarman evidences some traits of Gandhari and the fact that Kharosthi manuscripts existed in China in that period will also support this supposition.<sup>12</sup>

The third work the Amitayurdhyana-sutra which has come down only in the Chinese translation, deals less with the description of the Sukhavati, but devotes more space to the recommendation of meditations on Amitayus, by means of which one may reach that Blessed Land. The loss of the Sanskrit original of this text is all the more regrettable, because it contains an interesting introduction, in which the story of Ajatasatru and Bimbisara is told, a story with which the Pali accounts are also familiar.<sup>13</sup>

Joyous and tranquil, perfectly wise and immaculate live the creatures in that world of benignity. With that extravagance of language and exaggeration of figures which have come across in the Mahayana-sutras has also described the grandeur of Amitabha and his paradise in the Sukhavati-vyuha.<sup>14</sup>

### Foot notes :

1. Christmas Humphrey, A Popular Dictionary of Buddhism (1962), P. 30; quoted in the Seeker's Glossary of Buddhism, p. 13.
2. T.O. Ling, A Dictionary of Buddhism (1972); quoted in the Seeker's Glossary of Buddhism, p. 13.
3. The 18<sup>th</sup> Vow of Dharmakara : "O Bhagavat, if these beings who have directed their thought towards the highest perfect knowledge in other worlds, and who, after having heard my name, when I have obtained Bodhi, have meditated on me with serene thoughts; if at that moment of their death, after having approached them, surrounded by an assembly of Bhikkhus, I should not stand before them, worshipped by them, that is, so that their thoughts should not be troubled, then may I not obtain the highest perfect knowledge."
4. Kenneth W. Morgan, The Path of the Buddha (1956) pp. 332-333.
5. Hisao Inagaki, A Dictionary of Japanese Buddhist Terms (198), 405 - 406; quoted in Seeker's Glossary of Buddhism, pp. 443-444.
6. Pure Land Buddhism; Dialogues with Ancient Masters, 30-31
7. In his The Path of the Buddha, Kenneth W Morgan disapproves the term 'Pure Land' and uses the word 'Pure Realm' for the reason that it is not anything local or concrete. .
8. Hajime Nakamura, Indian Buddhism, Pp. 204
9. See note 3 of p.6.
10. Ibid, PP 3 1 0-3 1 1 ; G.K. Nariman, Literary History of Sanskrit Buddhism p.77-78.
11. Egaku Mayeda, Yuki Comm. Vol. Pp. 122.
12. John Broug, BSOAS, Vol XXVIII, part 3, 1969. Hajime Nakamura, Indian Buddhism p. 205.
13. Winternitz, History of Indian Literature, Vol. II.p. 312.
14. G.K. Nariman, Literary History of Sanskrit Buddhism, p. 78.

# Theory of dependent arising in Buddhism

**Jampa Sonam**

I pay homage to you, the highest  
And supreme among all the preachers  
Who mentioned Emptiness as other dimension of dependent-arising  
(pratityasmutpada)  
To liberate sentient being from all kinds of defects.

Here, what is to be expressed is about dependent arising (Pratitya asamutpada) which is the supreme teaching of Buddha Shakyamuni. Acharya Nagarjuna also said in his fundamental treatise on the Middle way, 'Whatever is dependently co-arisen, that is explained to be emptiness.' In Sanskrit, dependent arising is called Pratityasamutpada, pratitya means depend and samutpada means arising. In general, the compositionally formed phenomena are explained to be dependent-arising which is accepted by all four schools (proponent of tenets) of Buddhism. As Vaibhasika and Sautrantik can not posit that all phenomena come into being via dependent arising because arising means the interdependence of cause and effect.. Thus they can only accept that it can be applied only on the twelve links of dependent origination.

Cittamatri's view of dependent arising is that if something is dependent arising then must be a nature of compounded phenomenon and because it is truly existent. Thus, assertion of uncompounded phenomena is not dependently arose is stated in the treatise called ultimate analysis on interdependence (Rten del tha che) by Khenpo Tsewang Sonam. He says that an uncompounded phenomenon is not dependently arising things because they do not hold the characteristics of interdependence. The three characteristics of dependent-arising are, arising from immovable condition, arising from impermanent condition and arising from potential condition.

Madhyamaka's view of dependent arising is that all phenomena are interdependent. They consider if a phenomenon is to be established then it must be the nature of interdependence. It is further emphasized in Mulamadhyamakakarika thus;

Something that is not dependently arisen  
Such a thing does not exist.  
Therefore a non-empty thing  
Does not exist.<sup>2</sup>

Similarly proponents of middle way consider all phenomena entail the nature of interdependence. Concerning this, it is said that dependent arising has four divisions, according a book entitled 'ultimate analysis of interdependence (Rten drel tha che). They are, dependent arising which depends upon causation, dependent arising which depends on conventional phenomena, compositional dependent arising and uncompounded dependent arising. Examples of these four divisions are respectively as following. Firstly from ignorance arises mental formation. Secondly, as a result of an existent of other side the hither can be posited. Third one is cittamitra's view of interdependence which consists of three characteristics. The three characteristics are: things arise from unchanging conditions, things arise from impermanent condition and things arise from potential conditions. The fourth one, interdependence of uncompounded phenomenon has many divisions which include three uncompounded phenomena, sixteen kinds of emptiness and so forth.

The benefit of transforming mind toward such profound and extensive emptiness and dependent arising is stated in Arya shalistamba Sutra by Acharya kamalashila. 'Oh Biksus! Those who realize dependent arising will realize Dharma and those who realize dharma will appear Buddha.' According to the quotations if the meaning of dependent arising is understood then reality of all phenomena will be realized. Therefore, enlightenment of Buddha would also be easily attained. Thus, what is this pratyasmutpada? The same text says, 'Meaning of pratyasamutpada is in this way, it arises because it exists. Ranging from the arising consciousness because of ignorance, to the suffering because of aging and death, utter lamentation, suffering and mental unhappiness and all miseries will arise. Therefore, only this great aggregate of suffering will spontaneously come out. Here, suffering, utter lamentation, painful, mental unhappiness and all miseries will be ceased by ceasing ignorance then this mere great aggregate of suffering will be ceased as well.'" According to the quotations, primarily compositional phenomenon is not arisen without causes, it is necessary to arise the things from causes. The cause also should be impermanent nature rather permanent nature. Moreover, the cause can also not be arisen from discordant cause rather it

## Theory of dependent arising in Buddhism

should arise from concordant causes. Thereafter, the same text says, the way of arising and ceasing the twelve links of dependent origination. Thus, the benefit of proper understanding the meaning of pratityasamutpada is to dispel shade of ignorance which leads one into cycling existence and to turn away from cycling existence. Thereby, one will be freed from the bondage of Samsaric existence and will be able to enter the path of liberation. It is said in dharmakirti's Pramanavartika. 'Because loving kindness so forth are not direct opposite to ignorance, they cannot completely destroy extreme defilement.' According to the above stanza, loving kindness and others can only suppress the gross mental afflictions, but it can not eradicate the defilement from its roots. Liberation can only be attained by the realization of pratityasamutpada. Therefore, Acharya Aryadeva states in his text entitled 'four hundred stanzas on the middle way.

When selflessness is seen in objection,  
The seed of existence is destroyed.  
Again the same text says.  
When dependent arising is seen  
Confusion will not occur.  
Thus every effort has been made here  
To explain precisely this subject.

The text further explains this point by the way of both example and explanation of the menaing:

As the tactile sense (pervades) the body  
Confusion is present in them all.  
By overcoming confusion one will also  
Overcome all disturbing emotions.

Thus, as Buddha teaches, the ultimate goal of Dharma is to realize the meaning of dependent arising. The understanding of dependent arising is for the purpose of realizing emptiness and emptiness is for the purpose of realizing dependent arising. Therefore, contemplation on the meaning of pratityasamutpada means to analyze the reality of phenomenon. Therefore, meaning dependent arising is incomparable jewels and it needs to be applied one's own character. This is taught in several Sutras and Shastras of Buddhism. Here, to this brief presentation of dependent arising has not been written carelessly, it has been written with sources drawn from Sutra and

Shastra of The lord Buddha and Acharyas. I am going to dedicate whatever collection of virtues and merits have been accumulated from writing piece with the help of our teachers, to sentient being may they attain the rank of Buddhahood.

#### **End Notes :**

1. De Tengyur. Uma. Che.. Chapter 24 p-15 Na.
2. De Tengyur. Uma. Che. Chapter-24 P-14 Na.
3. Acharya Kamalashila's Arya shalistamba Sutra Commentary by Pro. Yeshe Thabgye. P-380 Line-6 Year-2010.
4. De Tengyur. Uma. Che. Arya Deva. Chapter-15 P-16 Na.
5. De Tengyur. Uma. Che. Chapter-6 P-7 Na.
6. De Ten. Auma. Tsa. Chapter-7 P-7 Na.

#### **Reference books :**

1. Madhyamak-prasanga-pada: by Shri. Chandra Kriti.
2. Aryashilastambasutra: by Acharya kamalashila.
3. Hundred stanzas on middle way 'Chatushatak': by Acharya Aaryadeva.
4. Pramanvartika: by Shri Dharma Kriti.



# **Evolution of the Vajrayana School of Buddhism in Tibet : An Analysis**

**Biswajit Sankar Bhattacharyya**

Buddhism in Indian subcontinent flourished between sixth century B. C. E. and twelfth century A.D. It was basically developed as an amalgamation of three different schools of thought: Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana. After the demise of Lord Buddha, the Hinayana school of Buddhism thrived. This school of thought focused on Asthadasha Nikaya and the four noble truths. The inception of Mahayana school of Buddhism happened in the first century. According to this school of thought, the practice of six Paramitas and the promulgation of the idea of Bodhisattvas were considered to be the chief duties. The Vajrayana school of Buddhism in the seventh century became distant from both its precursors and it created an unprecedented tradition by synthesizing the concept of Buddhism and Tantra together. In the hand of the Vajrayana Buddhism changed its initial path and emerged as an applicative school of Buddhism.

From India, the three schools of Buddhism travelled to the different countries of Asia. On one hand, Theravada, a part of 'Ashtadasha Nikaya' became popular in the countries of south-east Asia; such as, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand. On the other hand, the Mahayana school was welcomed in China, Japan and Korea. But, the Vajrayana school was confined only in Tibet.<sup>1</sup>

The ideas of Vajrayana school took a long 1200 years to promote in Tibet. The Vajrayana in spirit is a synthesis of the Mahayana sect, Tantric Hinduism and Tibet's own Bon religion. The development of the Vajrayana reflects Tibet's natural surroundings, its socio-political-economic atmosphere and the consciousness of the people. This paper intends to logically clarify the reasons behind the development of the Vajrayana in Tibet as well as the spreading of it in the world after the incorporation of Tibet into People's Republic of China in 1959. There are two divisions in this paper dealing with the inceptions and gradual development of the Vajrayana. The first part shows the reasons behind the inception of it in India and its prominent

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features. The different steps of its propagation and reasons for its popularity in Tibet in dealt with in the second part.

### **The Inception of the Vajrayana School and its Gradual Development:**

There is a story related to the inception of the Vajrayana school in India. The Buddhist monk, Naropa (1016 – 1100) was a student of religion in Nalanda. An old lady inspired him to rise above the knowledge confined in the university and to learn about the applicative aspect of dharma. She also said that Naropa could gain knowledge of this applicative part only from Tilopa, the wisest. But even after many investigations the famous Siddha could not be found. After a few days, while having food at one monastery, Naropa saw a beggar in torn clothing eating a baked fish in the kitchen. When Naropa resisted, he noticed with awe that the beggar threw the fish in water and the fish came back to life. He felt that the beggar was the famed Siddha Tilopa and he immediately became his disciple to attain the knowledge of the applicative aspect of Buddhism.<sup>2</sup> Apparently, there can be no link between this incident and the moral lessons of Buddhism. Rather, it further consolidates various myths about different Hindu Tantric Siddhai's. Again the ideas of Tantric Buddhism when compared with the sermons of Lord Buddha, cannot establish any connection between these two. But, the masters or Acharyas of Tantric Buddhism or the Vajrayana sect never find their ideas different than that of Lord Buddha. In their opinion, the Vajrayana is the application of the main sermons of Lord Buddha. In Buddhism, the life of Lord Buddha is divided into three main paths: Nirmanakaya, Sambhogakaya and Dharmakaya.<sup>3</sup> The mortal life of the of the lord in the palace, his rejection of the world and meditations, his attaining of salvation through mediation are considered as parts of the Nirmanakaya. On the other hand, the Sambhogakaya form of Lord Buddha signifies his enlightened soul. According to the scholars, in this enlightened form, the Lord educated the heavenly gods and presented himself before the elevated souls who attained a higher pedestal in meditation. The third form Dharmakaya has unified the Lord with the natural world. According to Vajrayana scholars, the Vajrayana school originates from Lord Buddha's Sambhogakaya form and it is in this form only that the Lord appeared in his Mahamudra. In the words of Reginald A. Ray :

Tibetans believe that the Buddha, as a realized being, manifests himself on many different levels. Following Indian tradition, they divide these levels into three primary "bodies." First is the

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nirmanakaya, emanation body, the Buddha's physical, human form in which-as described in his early biographies-he appears as a prince, renounces the world, and follows the path to Enlightenment. Second, the Buddha appears as the Sambhogakaya, body of enjoyment, his brilliant, transfigured, nonphysical form of light. In this body he journeys to the heavens, teaches the gods, and reveals himself to highly attained people. Finally there is the Buddha's dharmakaya, the body of reality itself, without specific, delimited form, wherein the Buddha is identified with the spiritually charged nature of everything that is. (13)

Three different religious schools evolved on the basis of these forms of Lord Buddha. These three religious school refers to the three Avartan (rotations) of the Dharmachakra. The Hinayana is the first rotation. This school has developed over the 'Four Noble Truths'. The Vinaya and the Abhidharma Pitaka of the Tripitaka are the two main books of Hinayana school. The second and third rotations formed their place in the Mahayana school. The important Sutras of the second rotation are – Mahayana Sutra and Prajnaparamita Sutra. The third rotation of Mahayana is formed according to the forms of Sandhinirmochana Sutra and Lankavatar Sutra. The Vajrayana school chiefly based on the philosophy of Tantra.<sup>4</sup> In his book, Secret of the Vajra World, Reginald A. Ray describes:

During the time when the Tibetans were studying in India, Indian scholars were in the process of organizing the wealth of the Buddha's legacy into the system known as the "three yanas." In this system, the early traditions of the Eighteen Schools were loosely designated by the term Hinayana, the "lesser vehicle," while the second yana was called Mahayana, "the great vehicle," and the third the Vajrayana, or "adamantine vehicle." The Tibetans, following Indian tradition, adopted this system and its way of viewing Indian Buddhist history. According to this interpretation, shortly after his Enlightenment, at the Deer Park in Benares the Buddha presented the first yana, the Hinayana. Here he promulgated the "first turning of the wheel of dharma," consisting of the four noble truths. This teaching spread quickly to multitudes of people through but India and became the foundational teachings of early Buddhism. Later, in Tibet, the Hinayana teachings provided Buddhist tradition both 1vith important practices (the Vinaya, or monastic discipline) and teachings (the Abhidharma, or advanced Buddhist psychology). (14 -15)

Mainly three stages of life are followed in Buddhism. The first stage is the monk's life within the confinement of the monastery; the second is the practice of austerity in the woods and living life in seclusion which practiced by the Lord Buddha; and the third stage is leading a householder's life while seeking refuge in Dharma. In Buddhism, the second way that is leading a secluded life in the woods has been considered as the best one in terms of lifestyle. However, at a later stage, life led as a monk at a monastery becomes the principal way of existence. The Vajrayana school of thought recommends life of seclusion in the woods. In the Vajrayana, the place of the teacher is much higher and this school treats the teacher's words as the essence of knowledge. This association between the teacher and the disciple could only flourish in its fullest in the woods. According to Lama Taranath, the secret knowledge of the Vajrayana disseminated from the teacher to the disciple in the woods.<sup>5</sup>

In Indian subcontinent, the Vajrayana school originated as a protest against the age old traditional Sanatana Dharma and two distinct schools of Buddhism, namely, the Hinayana and the Mahayana. Unlike traditional Sanatana Dharma, the Vajrayana encompassed people of all the castes, creeds and communities. To support this statement, the name of Manibhadra, a housewife can be cited. She followed the path of the Vajrayana and became a Siddha. The history of the Vajrayana school in Indian subcontinent mentions the names of many practitioners who basically led the life of householders. Discarding the theoretical aspect of religion, the Vajrayana always emphasized upon the applicability of it. The same idea reverberates in the story of Abhakar Gupta and Goddess Vajrayogini. Goddess Vajrayogini asked Abhakar Gupta, a renowned scholar of Buddhism to get rid of the theoretical speculations of religion and embrace the application part of it.<sup>6</sup>

### **Development of the Vajrayana School in Tibet :**

From seventh century A.D. to twelfth century A.D. Buddhism became highly popular in Tibet. The whole time span can be divided into two phases. In the first phase (from seventh century to ninth century), the Tibetan kings were influenced by Buddhism and they were very much interested to transmit Buddhism throughout the country. Unlike the first phase, the second phase (from tenth century to twelfth century) was dominated by the Buddhist Acharyas (masters) of India and Tibet. In this phase, the four sects of Buddhism, such as Nyingma, Sakya, Kagyu and Kadam/Geluk flourished. But, in Tibet, the Vajrayana did not bloom in peace; rather, in the process of

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popularizing Buddhism, a huge amount of debate and disagreement was taken place between three schools, namely, the Hinayana, the Mahayana and the Vajrayana.<sup>7</sup>

In the first phase, three kings of Tibet: Songtsen Gampo (609 – 649), Trisong Detsen (754 – 797) and Ralpache (815 – 836) contributed greatly in increasing the popularity of Vuddhism. In this phase, the two schools of Buddhism, the Mahayana and the Bajrayana were flourished together. The history of Tibet says that King Songtsen Gampo had two wives: one was the princess of China and another was the princess of Nepal. The two queens were the followers of Buddhism and due to their interest Buddhism was adopted by the Tibetan royal court. The king was very keen to spread the religion among the Tibetan mass and due to that he sent one of his ministers to India to get some knowledge about the alphabet, so the Buddhist sermon could be engraved using that alphabet. At this time Mahayana school was more celebrated in Tibet than the Vajrayana.<sup>8</sup>

In the eighth century, King Trisong Detsen invited the great Buddhist scholar Shantarakshita in Tibet to establish a monastery. Myths says that due to the hindrance made by the local spirits, Shantarakshita was unsuccessful to establish a monastery and left Tibet. But the king was hopeful and he invited Acharya Padmasambhava, a celebrated tantric yogin, to resolve the problem. Acharya Padmasambhava accepted king's invitation and came to Tibet. Within no time, he was able to tame the local spirits and helped Shantarakshita to return Tibet and establish Samaye monastery. In this era, two different schools of Buddhism, the Mahayana and the Bajrayana, flourished simultaneously in Tibet. In one hand, Shantarakshita propagated the Mahayana school of thought based on the principles of monastery life. On the other hand, Acharya Padmasambhava and other Indian tantric yogins, such as Vimalamitra and Virochana, popularized Vajrayana school of thought which basically emphasized on the application part of religion. The king, Trisong Detsen allowed both the schools to spread their ideas in Tibet and also helped to translate Buddhist scriptures in Tibetan language.<sup>9</sup>

In the ninth century, King Ralpachen patronized Buddhism and popularized it among the Tibetan people. But, after the assassination of the king in 836, his elder brother, Langdarma became the king of Tibet and being a non-believer of Buddhism, from his tenure Buddhism lost the support of royal court. At the same time, four different schools of Buddhism, such as, Nyingma, Sakya, Kagjyu, and Kadam/Geluk were originated in Tibet.<sup>10</sup>

The Nyingma school was originated in first phase, whereas the other schools came in prominence in the second phase. At time of its origination,

the Nyingma school had not any specific nomenclature. Rather, the sect was termed as 'cho' which is Tibetan translation of Sanskrit word dharma. Later on the school was celebrated as Nyingma. The philosophy of this school was basically based on the doctrines of Vajrayana school. The school popularized the teachings of famous tantric yogins, such as Acharya Padmasambhava, Yeshe Tsogyal, Vimalamitra and Vairochan. The teachers of this sect also rendered the knowledge by adopting two teaching techniques: Terma and Kama. Kama technique followed traditional teaching style where the teacher was entirely responsible to impart his/her knowledge to the students. But, Terma method of teaching emphasized upon the capability of the disciples to acquire knowledge. The descriptions of different practices were hidden in different places in Tibet by Acharya Padmasambhava and Yeshe Tsogyal for the disciples of future generations. In the present time also, the interested followers of the Nyingma school find out the methods and description of different practices written by Acharya Padmasambhava and utilize them to enrich the application part of the sect. Great contemporary masters of the sect, Dudjom Rinpoche and Khyentse Rinpoche find out many important teachings of the past and make it available for the modern-day practitioners.<sup>11</sup>

The second phase of Buddhism in Tibet was basically governed by different monasteries. At this time, the monasteries became the centres of socio-political and economic activities. The priority of the monasteries not only included the religious teachings, but also the studies of different subjects, such as, literature, art, medicine, land-administration were taken care. To retain the political control of Tibet, monasteries introduced Sakyapas in thirteenth century, Kagyupas in fourteenth century and Gelukpas in seventeenth century.<sup>12</sup> In 1042, Atish Dipankar founded the Kadam school. He also wrote a book named Bodhipatha Pradip.<sup>13</sup> The founder of the Geluk school, Tsongkhapa was inspired by Atish Dipankar's Bodhipatha Pradip.<sup>14</sup> The Sakya school was founded by the great tantric Virupa.<sup>15</sup> Tilopa was the founder of the Kagyan school.<sup>16</sup> Till the beginning of twentieth century, the Bajrayana became the guiding force of Tibet. In 1959, due to the incorporation of Tibet into People's Republic of China, Tenzin Gyatso, the Dalai Lama left Tibet and came to India. The banishment of Dalai Lama from Tibet was badly affected the practice of the Bajrayana. But, in modern scenario the secret Bajrayana is thriving and gaining its popularity throughout the world.

## **Evolution of the Vajrayana School of Buddhism in Tibet : An Analysis**

### **End Notes :**

1. Ray, Reginald A. Secret of the Vajra World. Boston: Shambhala Publications, 2001. pp. 3-4.
2. Ibid., pp. 9-11.
3. Ibid., pp. 13-17.
4. Ibid., pp. 14-15.
5. Ibid., pp. 17-20.
6. Ibid., pp. 24.
7. Ibid., pp. 28.
8. Ibid., pp. 29.
9. Ibid., pp. 30-34.
10. Ibid., pp. 34.
11. Ibid., pp. 34-39.
12. Ibid., pp. 42.
13. Ibid., pp. 42-44.
14. Ibid., pp. 45.
15. Ibid., pp. 45.
16. Ibid., pp. 47.

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# **Buddhism : World Peace and Harmony**

**Bandana Bhattacharya (Mukherjee)**

## **Introduction :**

It is an undeniable fact that every human being in this earth wants peace and happiness. They always tried their best to avoid any kind of suffering. This is clear from the fact that human beings have dedicated their every effort from the dawn of the civilization upto at present to the removal of suffering and achievement of peace and happiness. But in reality we have found just opposite of what we want. Acharya Shantideva says in his "Engaging in the deeds of a Bodhisattva."

Although we wish to discard suffering  
we rush only after it's causes

Although we long for happiness  
we ignorantly destroy our own happiness as if it were an enemy.

We have witnessed the great achievement of science and technology and are able to appreciate how they have benefitted us. But we should be aware of the other side of the same coin. The misuse of scientific and technological invention for self-interest is the basic reason of all of our worries and sufferings.

After the second world war, six decades have already been elapsed, still then the trumpet of hue and cry for self interest is playing. The threatening of next world war comes ahead. The people of the world therefore await for the forthcoming appliances like Micro-biotic bombs, napalm bombs etc. Discord and disharmony among the human beings and their endless hungers lead to unrest and distrust between one group and the other.

Under the above circumstances, world peace remains far away from the reach of the humans. The object of the present paper is to find out the root-cause of these unrests and to focus how far Buddhism is applicable to restore the rationale of humans to save them from their psychic unrest and to achieve world peace and harmony.

Before entering into a discussion on the said topic it is prudent to discuss why today the whole world is facing the problem of Eco-disaster, social inequality, enmity, threatening of war, competition rather than a race among the



people, complex in mind etc : burning problems of the world for which human beings are very much worried, and lost their mental peace. About the phenomenal world, Buddhism holds that nothing is constituted which is not caused and conditioned.<sup>1</sup>

*ye dhammā hetuppabhavā tesāṃ hetuṃ tathāgata āha // tesāṃ ca yo nirodha evaṃvādi mahāsamano //*

[The phenomenon which are originated hold causes, as that is said by Tathagata, the great Samano, these causes are liable for cessation]

Similarly it is stated in the Śāntiparvan of the Mahābhārata (14.6)

*Na kascid kasyacin mitram na kascid kasyadd ripuḥ / kārya-kāraṇa vasena kascid mitram kaseid ripuḥ //*

[None is a friend to one, none is a foe to other, one becomes a friend or a foe depending on the causes and conditions.] That means ‘enmity’ which is the root of all problems is conditional, non enmity is equally conditional. Enmity is caused by the physical or the mental cravings (*tanha*) or the both in respect of the individual and that of groups. Since it is conditional it is to be eradicated by non-enmity. The Dhammapada states thus : enmity is never overcome by enmity, enmity is appeased by non-enmity : it is the eternal law [Dhp V-5]<sup>2</sup> . In other words, ‘craving’ for availing in maximum quantum may be termed as ‘hungers’ to have unlimited possession by depriving others. This tendency is main root of all enmity. The present environment of exploitation in all respects, hegemony and malignancy are conditional. Those are liable to be ceased, as Buddhist holds, provided proper measures be undertaken to make them ceased.

### The Buddhist approach :

Buddha had been aware of the intrinsic nature of the sentient beings, especially the human beings. The *Aggañña. Sutta* of the Dīgha Nikāya refers to the primitive state of the humans when (here had been no enmity. In the older days, the humans had not been crafty to share more than that are required. Due to the craftiness sponsored by craving in allurements one indulged to snatch from other’s property either openly or secretly. As a result ego-hunger generates. Due to the ego-hunger or ego clash the seed of war germinates. According to Buddhism the Mental defilements-*Rāga lobha*, ‘*dosa*’ and ‘*Moho*’ are the root of all ego, sorrows and suffering. “So it is rightly said in the Buddhist-literature, “why you cleanse yourself outside while you are filthy within. Be Pure within”

*“Kim te jātāhi dummedha kiṃte ajīhasātiya  
Abhantaṃ te gahaṇaṃ bāhiraṃ parimajjasi”<sup>3</sup>*

Hungers, whether objective or subjective knows no law. Driven by the pressure of hunger a group of human being committing the violent offences which are recorded in the history of bloody massacre and dreadful world wars. The human victims of violence caused by group enmity for cumulative hungers during the last few centuries may be graphed in columns as their growth record show<sup>4</sup> :

17th Cent AD	18th Cent AD	19th Cent AD	20th Cent AD
33,00,000	57,77,000	96,73,000	51,34,400.000
victims	victims	victims	victims

So the above increasing growth rate record of victims of violence caused by human 'hunger' proves tragic conditions of the present world.

Due to the increasing growth rate of human cravings [tanha] and hunger the whole world is in the grip of formidable multidimensional quandaries. The society is under great stress and strain. The discomfort is being felt in almost every pockets like social, cultural, economic, environmental and ecological. The disbalance is prominent in every sphere. Owing to moral degeneration the society is facing multi-pronged crisis. The global peace is endangered. The irrational and excessive use of or misuse of natural resources due to group hungers or individual hungers has a serious impact on the physical environment and ecology. The outcome of this individual or group-hungers and egoism are global terrorism, violence and corruption. Casteism, communalism, crime against women and children, use of nuclear weapons for devastation, militarization, deprivation and religious fundamentalism etc. are rendering the earth a miserable place to live in. There is no doubt that it has mainly started after the industrial revolution and mainly after second world-war. Initially it was very slow. But gradually it has assumed serious dimensions. We all could see that its impact on ecology is the result of pandemic in nature and it's ruinous effect in the globe especially in India, China, Japan and USA. For instance, at the end of the first world war, the pandemic influenza broke out on the western front and thence rolled out its fangs around the world.<sup>5</sup> Another recent instance of epidemic is swine flue which broke out in Mexico first and then spread to various parts of the world via USA. The unending greed, craving and lust for more material gains, the industrialisation and the mal-use of technical science have resulted into the holes in the ozone layer of atmosphere causing global warming, melting snow, receding glaciers, flood, earth quakes, tsunamies and progressively increasing air, water and sound pollution. As a result of pollution the living beings are destined to consume poisonous substances and inhale health hazardous gases like carbon-di-oxide and carbon monoxide.

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Furthermore, in this context we may mention the recent painful natural disaster in Uttarakhand in India. Thousand of people in various parts of Chameli, Uttarkasi, Rudraprayaga, Tehri, Garhwal, Kedarnath, Badrinath and Gaurikund areas were died. Sudden flash flood, heavy storm, and incessant rain triggered massive landslides and the river like Alokanda and Mandakini turned into torrential streams. Although this environmental disaster looks like natural disaster but environmentalists have called it **man-made disaster**. Unchecked deforestation, illegal constructions in general, the reckless assault on nature are the chief reasons behind the tragedy. For getting financial benefit for endless 'hunger' of human beings, self-centred group interest, inspite of repeated warnings from Meteorological and Engineering department, real-estate development and tourism have been accorded priority in Uttarakhand. Illegal constructions on the banks of the rivers, along the mountain slopes, constant deforestation for the preparation of road by using Dynamite etc have expanded rapidly. All these causes ultimately led to this disaster which is mostly man-made as it is remarked by naturalists and scientists. This recent disaster is a lesson for India. But at the same time it is also a warning alarm for the whole world of being against their endless 'hunger' for money and power. In other words, it is the result of the drop of human ethical value.

### How to overcome this problem :

Undoubtedly, such a hazardous situation is a creation of our *ignorance* about the future, irrationality, our endless, hunger and thirst for self-interest. Therefore onus lies on us alone-both individually and collectively to restore and sustain the earth as a safe, secure and serene place to live in add to ensure a congenial environment for the survival, protection and growth of all living beings on earth.

Social scientists, social activists, Philosopher, Policy-makers and others are trying their best to provide guidelines and suggestions to overcome the damages already happen and to bring peace and harmony As it has already been mentioned the drop of human ethical value is most important reason for break through in peace in all respect.

### A Buddhist Response :

Goutama Buddha like many other religious teachers and thinkers prescribed the measures how to enkindle oneself within *-attadīti po bhava*". Practice always the ethical mindfulness for the good of many : *bhaujana hitāya* and for the welfare of many : *bahujana sukhāhaya*. An ethical

mindfulness is not a hard task. It requires constant alertness in mind for what is being thought, what is being spoken and what is being performed at the individual level. It may otherwise be called Momentary Mindfull Awareness (MMA) which is a very important practice in the present day. The momentary mindfulness by *smṛtyupasthāna* of Buddhist yoga and the practice of *Brahmacarya* are the bases of the *Bodhi*mind (Bodhicitta). A positive reply on behalf of the Buddhist Brotherhood may be : utilise the present day scientific skill and technological appliances as and when required to overcome enmity both at the individual level and that at the group level. In this regard the following lines from the Pali literature is noteworthy :

“*Kullūpamam bhikkhūve dhammam desemi uttaranāya na gaṇhāya.*”<sup>6</sup>

Bhikkhus my teachings (*dhamma*) are like rafts how to cross (a water course from one shore to other), not to hold that raft (after its use). Machines and technological appliances are to use as means to an end, not to abuse them for demolishing the human existence from the earth.

Those who have witnessed the devastating scenes at Hiroshima (Aug-8, 1945) and Nagasaki (Aug-9, 1945) and also horrible heaps of deadbodies at Bhopal (Dec. 4, 1984) realise the brutal menace caused by machines. In fact, the human mind and face have been deformed by the pluralization of individual and that of collective hungers which have no limit. Practically human life have faced a drastic forfeiture for unprecedented depreciation of human values. Mention may be made here that after the bomb blasting at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Albert Einstein (1879-1955) was however apologetic for the whole situation to Hideki Uekawa, a noble laureate of Japan. It was not for his invention of universal Mass Energy Equivalence theory ( $E=Mc^2$ ), but for the dreadful application of energy by war-maddened group of people to destroy human life.

Another burning example of human aggressive behavior is the recent incidence of continuous bomb blasting in Maha Bodhi Temple at Bodhi-Gaya on 4th July 2013. All those are examples of misuse of scientific invention for threatening world peace. To safeguard these disturbances in the present world the UNO and many other Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) have now come forward in the post World war period.

### **Buddhist approach for peace and harmony :**

According to Buddhist philosophy enmity generates internally in one's mind or that in group mind. Māra lies within until 'Bodhi' is achieved by sentient being. The psychic blend of compassion (*Karuṇā*) with wisdom (*prajñā*) are lying in the mind of men irrespective of caste class and gender

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distinction. For availing peace and harmony against discord and disharmony among the human group, non-enmity is to cultivate by opening inter-cultural dialogues on the major problems and minor issues of the contemporary world.

For the maintenance of national unity, peace and harmony the following discourses of Lord Buddha recorded in the Mahāparinibbāna Suttanta of the *Dīgha Nikāya*.<sup>7</sup> In this discourse Buddha by way of discussion mentions seven essential conditions to be observed by a successful nation.

These are as follows :

- a. Frequent meetings or consultation.
- b. Consensus of opinion among all groups
- c. Adherence to old injunctions and traditions
- d. Respect of elders
- e. Respect of womenfolk
- f. Reverence to place of worship within and outside the territory and
- g. Protection and support of worthy saints in the territory.

The Buddhist-episode reveals the fact that national integration is an urgent need for very existence and security of any country.

Later on after three hundred years, Asoka, king of Magadha and Emperor of Jambudvīpa has endeavoured to maintain solidarity and integration of his empire by initiating Buddha's noble doctrines. This principle of King Asoka is reflected through his Rock-Edicts and pillar Edicts.

The above essential principles of Lord Buddha and later on the principles of King Asoka for the maintenance of peace and harmony are reflected in United Nations Educational Scientific Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) charter 1945-46 (p.7 New York 1947). Throughout the vast Buddhist literature there are many such discourses that advocate the cause of national integration, communal harmony and peace.

More than 2600 years ago, Lord Buddha is said to have shown the Middle Path (Majjhima Paṭipadā) to appease the human mind and the source of human hunger. He prescribed the practice of good deeds par excellence (pāramitā), that makes one indifferent of one's ego, personal loss or gain which are very important for the contemporary society.

At the international level, the five norms of interstate behavioural pattern among the nations are enumerated in Bandung Agreement on April 29 1954 under five headlines :

1. Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

2. Mutual non-aggression
3. Mutual non-interference in each others internal affairs
4. Equality of Mutual benefit
5. Peaceful co-existence.

The above five conducts of the international statecraft are being promulgated for world peace and harmony inspite of some instance of deperture. Socio political tensions at the international level now play a massive control over the human societies due to high economic disparity among the developed, the developing, the under developed and backward countries in present world. As a result of that -human values are being not only depleted, but also deleted in many cases.

So it may be conclude that Buddha's tenet of truth, peace, Brahmavihāra, and tolerance are as relevant now-a days as they were many centuries before. Presendy 'rampant meterialism and persuit of individual success, at all costs have eroded die ties of brotherhood and community.' In this circumstances it is necessary to remember and propagate the message of compassion and love of Lord Buddha : "hatred can be replaced by love, strife by peace and confrontation by co-operation."<sup>8</sup>

### End Notes :

1. Vinaya Piṭaka Mahavagga 1
2. Dhammapada verse No : 5  
*Na hi verena verāni sammantidha kudācanam /  
averena casammanti esa dhamme sanatane //*
3. Dhammapada Verse No. 394
4. *Desh*— a weekly publication in Bengali Sept. 23, 1995
5. Elton, charles, S. *The ecology of invasions by animals and plants* [Methuen & Ltd. London, replt. 1966. p. 15
6. Majjhima Nikāya [London, Pali Text Society] Vol 1-134
7. Digha NMya Vol-II, pp. 72-168  
(a) Abhinnaṃ sannipātā sannipātabahulā bhavissanti....  
(b) *samaggā sannaparissanti samaggā vutthahissand, samaggā....*  
(c) *Appaññattaṃ paññāpessanti, paññattana smucchindanti....*  
(d) *Mahallakā te sakkarissanti garu katissanti mānessanti pūjessanti tesam ca sotabbam maññissanti...*  
(e) *ta kulatthiyo kulakumariyo ta na okkassa pasayha vāsessanti....*  
(f) *cetiyaṇi abbhantarani c'eva bāhirani ca tāni sakkarissanti garukatissavti mānessanti pūjessanti, tesañ ca diṇṇapubbata hatapubbaṃ dhammikaṃ baluṃ no padhāpessanti....*  
(g) *Arahantesu dhammika-rakkha varanaguttā susamvihita bhavissanti....*
8. Tiwari, M. Ed. *Bodhi Rasmi* (New Delhi, first International conference on Buddhism & national culture, 1984 p.-5)

# **Buddhism and Current Global Challenges**

## **Buddhist Perspectives on : Social discrimination in Thailand**

**Onanong Howatthanasuk**  
(Ven. Dhammadipa Bhikkhuni)

### **Abstract :**

In this 21<sup>st</sup> century Buddhism<sup>1</sup> which taught by the Buddha is still widely spread and flourished by learning and practicing in various countries of Eastern and Western. Theravāda Buddhism is strictly pursued in Thailand, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Southeast. Buddha discourse aims to get out from all sufferings with the supreme goal of attaining Enlightenment and ending the rebirth. Anyone who is young, old, male, and female, black, white or any race can follow the Buddha's middle path with the noble eight fold paths which leads to the liberation. We can realize that there is no discrimination on race, gender, colour, age, caste and disability in Buddhism at the ancient time. In this Millennium, the Constitution globally provides for equal treatment under the law without respect to race, sex, religion, disability, language, or social status; however, in practice, some discrimination existed, and government enforcement of equal protection statutes was uneven. In Thailand which consists of 94.6% (in year 2010) Buddhist of total population 67,786 thousand peoples (in year 2012) of which 34,579 thousand were women-approximately 51 percent of the population, however nowadays still has these kind of problems such as fighting and killing Buddhist monks and nuns by the violent Muslims in the 4 provinces at southern part, prostitutes, rape and women right in Bhikkhuni ordination. This paper purposes on examining social discrimination on gender and religion in Thailand. The sources of study are the primary and secondary sources such as interview, observation and literary sources. The paper's conclusions address the implementations of solving the problems.

### **Introduction :**

Although every countries in global is highly developed themselves to be the most power, civilization and prosperity they have to go on competitions in economic, social, political, army, culture, religion, language, technology

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and etc. With these competitions affect us to create more and more of greed, anger and delusion. Religion is important to lead human beings to have more peaceful and wisdom. Thailand is a democratically governed constitutional monarchy. Since 1992, there have been five national multiparty elections, which transferred power to successive governments through peaceful, democratic processes. The King exerts strong informal influence but never has used his constitutionally mandated power to veto legislation or to dissolve the elected bicameral Parliament. The outstanding woman, Yingluck Shinawatra is a Thai businesswoman and politician, a member of the Pheu Thai Party who became the 28<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister of Thailand following the 2011 general election. She was Thailand's first female Prime Minister and its youngest in over 60 years. She was removed from office on 7 May 2014 by a Constitutional Court decision that found her guilty on a charge of abuse of power. When she was a Prime Minister of Thailand, there were many arguments and unacceptances from the opposite political sides and sexists. Such an election is very symbolic and a good incentive for employers in Thailand to value women's works more. Still, societal attitudes need to change as women are still often perceived as having less skilled than men. There were some restrictions on freedom of movement. The Government hindered the activity of some human rights groups. The 1997 Constitution increased legal protections for women and persons with disabilities; however, some inequities in the law remained, and some protections were not enforced. Violence and societal discrimination against women were problems. Societal discrimination against hill tribes and religious and ethnic minorities continued. There were reports of forced labor and child labor. Trafficking in women and children, coerced prostitution and labor were serious problems. The law provides for freedom of religion, and the Government generally respected this right in practice; however, it restricted the activities of some groups. Bhikkhuni Dhammanada provided a helpful discussion of the current challenges faced by nuns or Bhikkhuni in the Theravāda tradition in Thailand. The few fully ordained Thai Bhikkhunis receive neither official recognition nor government support opposite to their male counterpart, Bhikkhus.<sup>2</sup> The Constitution requires that the monarch be a Buddhist. The state religion is in effect Theravāda Buddhism; however, it is not designated as such. The Supreme Patriarch still unrevised the monk law of prohibiting the Sāmaṇeri, Sikkhamaṇā and Bhikkhuni Order which had been forced from 1928 till present (85 years). This law ending the hope of women who aim to practice in Monastic life of Bhikkhuni Saṃgha by pursuing Theravāda Buddhism which the Buddha



established Bhikkhu, Bhikkhunī, Laymen and Laywomen firmly from the ancient time. There are also objections to the establishment of a Theravāda Bhikkhunī order in certain countries such as in Thailand, Sri Lanka and Myanmar. Women can only become white-cloaked nuns, who are routinely treated as domestic servants. Many believe women are inferior beings who had better perform plenty of good deeds to ensure they will be reborn as men in their future lives. A “rebel ordination” in Thailand of eight Bhikkhunīs on November 2014 by Sri Larikan Saṃghas that drew broad criticism of the Sangha Supreme Council and then issued a resolution on the prohibition on the ordination of Bhikkhunīs in Thailand and follow announced on December 11th, 2014 contain two important respects: 1) The effectiveness of 1928 ban: No allowance for all Thai Bhikkhu Sangha to ordain women as Sāmaṇerīs and Bhikkhunīs. 2) The association was assigned to The Buddhist religion in coordination with the State Department to issue a declaration of Buddhist Bhikkhus from different countries to come to the ordination ceremony. Bhikkhunī and Sāmaṇeri Ordination in Thailand must be informed the Supreme Sangha, get informed and get a permit written before the resolution, which is contrary to the Constitution, Kingdom of Thailand (Interim) Act 2014, section 4 Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women Format (CEDAW) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) to which the joint meeting, the meeting resolved to send a complaint to the Commission, religion, art and culture and explore the National Assembly for further consideration.<sup>3</sup> The resolution from the Commission of National Human Right issued an official letters, No 484/2015 dated June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015 to the relevant government department for proceeding to law in 2 points; (1) Assigning to the Religious Affairs Department, Ministry of Art and Culture of Thailand which has responsibility on issuing the certified official document for religious persons to grant the certified documents for the authentication of Bhikkhunīs and Sāmaṇerīs who received the higher ordination in the same standard as for Bhikkhus and Samaneras who are Thai citizens and (2) Assigning the residence of Bhikkhunī Sangha as a juristic person which the concerned government department will examine and grant the official document to certify that place as a religious juristic person legally according to law. This resolution is submitted to the cabinet for modifying the law continually.<sup>4</sup> The Constitution provides for equal treatment under the law without respect to race, sex, religion, disability, language, or social status; however, in practice, some

discrimination existed, and government enforcement of equal protection statutes was uneven.

### What is Discrimination?

*Discrimination* refers to the practice of treating somebody or a particular group in society less fairly than others. People with experience of mental distress regularly face stigma and discrimination, denying them the opportunity to live their lives to the full. People might be discriminated against by employers, landlords, service providers like shops, restaurants or insurance companies, public authorities like a local council, or anyone in society. There are four main explanations of discrimination:

1. *Authoritarian Personality*: means personality of believing that people to obey authority and rules, even when these unfair, and even if it means that they lose their personal freedom.

2. *Realistic Conflict Theory-Robbers Cave*: means accepting in a sensible way that it is actually possible to do or achieve in a particular situation.

3. *Stereotyping Theory*: means a fixed idea or image that many people have of a particular type of person or thing, but which is often not true in reality;

4. *Social identity Theory*: means the characteristics, feelings or beliefs that distinguish people from others which connected with society and the way it is organized/connected with your position in society.

Social scientists have also identified some common social factors that may contribute to the presence of discrimination:

1. *Socialization*. Much discrimination seems to be passed along from parents to children. The media—including television, movies, and advertising—also perpetuate demeaning images and stereotypes about assorted groups, such as ethnic minorities, women, gays and lesbians, the disabled, and the elderly.

2. *Conforming behaviors*. Discrimination may bring support from significant others, so rejecting discrimination may lead to losing social support. The pressures to conform to the views of families, friends, and associates can be formidable.

3. *Economic benefits*. Social studies have confirmed that discrimination especially rises when groups are in direct competition for jobs. This may help to explain why discrimination increases dramatically during times of economic and social stress.

4. *Authoritarian personality*. In response to early socialization, some people are especially prone to stereotypical thinking and projection based on unconscious fears. People with an **authoritarian personality** rigidly

conform, submit without question to their superiors, reject those they consider to be inferiors, and express intolerant sexual and religious opinions. The authoritarian personality may have its roots in parents who are unloving and aloof disciplinarians. The child then learns to control his or her anxieties via rigid attitudes.

5. *Ethnocentrism*. **Ethnocentrism** is the tendency to evaluate others' cultures by one's own cultural norms and values. It also includes a suspicion of outsiders. Most cultures have their ethnocentric tendencies, which usually involve stereotypical thinking.

6. *Group closure*. **Group closure** is the process whereby groups keep clear boundaries between themselves and others. Refusing to marry outside an ethnic group is an example of how group closure is accomplished.

7. *Conflict theory*. Under **conflict theory**, in order to hold onto their distinctive social status, power, and possessions, privileged groups are invested in seeing that no competition for resources arises from minority groups. The powerful may even be ready to resort to extreme acts of violence against others to protect their interests. As a result, members of underprivileged groups may retaliate with violence in an attempt to improve their circumstances.

### **Social Discrimination on the grounds of Gender, Religion and Social Status**

Some examples of social class discrimination we have faces in Thailand are :

1. The health care card for Thai citizens who have no income or very low income that cannot afford medicine and health care when they are ill and have emergency accidents. The money will be paid by the welfare department as well be required to say "Hi I'm poor", as soon as you are in need of government assistance. So the discrimination starts immediately by the government actually.

2. The inconvenience of prohibiting female to walk inside of some Stupas and Clean the Buddha image statue. It is very exclusive for male only. This shows that female is not purifying enough to get close to the sacred places or Buddhist objects. In the monasteries, female has to sit, walk, and stand behind or under the monks and novices and also eating foods which have been left after the monks have finished partaking.

3. The first woman Prime Minister of Thailand, Yingluck Shinawatra has been opposed, argued and blamed by the contrary parties. Also some monk criticized and blamed her on his Dhamma talk that she has not deserved to

be the Prime Ministry who is the-leader of Thailand because she is a woman, let only a man who can be the Prime Ministry of Thailand. The monk also raised the Buddha Word which stated that “The woman is not qualified to be the leader of society”. But by the perception of the Buddha, woman has equality to attain enlightenment as man so it is no reason that why woman cannot be the leader equal to man.

4. In 1928, the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand, responding to the attempted ordination of two women, issued an edict that monks must not ordain women. The two women were reportedly arrested and jailed briefly. In a more recent challenge to the Thai Sangha’s ban on women, Dhammananda Bhikkhuni, previously a professor of Buddhist philosophy known as Dr. Chatsumarn Kabil Singh, was controversially ordained as a nun in Sri Lanka in 2003. Despite some support inside the religious hierarchy, the Samgha remains fiercely opposed to the ordination of women. But from the Thai Constitution in 2007, Act no.37 stated that the citizens have human rights for believing any religious and pursuing ritual freedom with the protection and security from the government. By the sub Act 37-no.2 stated that male and female has the equal right. The Dalai Lama, in his speech on the final morning, emphasized his support for the abolition of discrimination against women, especially within the Sarigha.

5. Prostitution is illegal but it flourished. Prostitution often was protected by local officials with a commercial interest in it. There are many forms of prostitution such as Bar and Night Club Lady, Singer, Partner and Sex tourism of Thai ladies and men include children. Government and NGO estimates of the number of women and children engaged in prostitution varied widely reported a figure of 200,000 persons, which was considered conservative. The Commission on Women’s Affairs estimated that in 2000, approximately 20 percent of prostitutes were children. The majority of prostitutes were not kept under physical constraint, but a large number worked under debt bondage. Trafficking in women and children for prostitution was a serious problem.

6. The Constitution provides for the equality of all citizens; however, some inequalities in the law remained. Marriage and family laws discriminate against women. A man may sue for divorce on the grounds that his wife committed adultery, but a woman faces the additional legal burden of proving that her husband has acknowledged publicly another woman as his wife.

7. Government regulations require employers to pay equal wages and benefits for equal work, regardless of gender. Nonetheless, discrimination in hiring was common, and there was a significant gap between the average

salaries earned by men and women because women were concentrated in lower paying jobs. In practice, women also received lower pay for equal work in virtually all sectors of the economy. A 2001 Ministry of Labor survey revealed that on average, men earned 17 percent more than women.

### Solutions to Discrimination

For decades, sociologists have looked to ways of reducing and eliminating conflicts and discrimination between groups:

- One theory, the **self-esteem hypothesis**, is that when people have an appropriate education and higher self-esteem, their discriminations will go away.
- Another theory is the **contact hypothesis**, which states that the best answer to discriminate is to bring together members of different groups so they can learn to appreciate their common experiences and backgrounds.
- A third theory, the **cooperation hypothesis**, holds that conflicting groups need to cooperate by laying aside their individual interests and learning to work together for shared goals.
- A fourth theory, the **legal hypothesis**, is that discrimination can be eliminated by enforcing laws against discriminative behavior.

To date, solutions to discrimination that emphasize change at the individual level have not been successful. In contrast, research sadly shows that even unprejudiced people can, under specific conditions of war or economic competition, become highly discriminated against their perceived “enemies.” Neither have attempts at desegregation in schools been successful. Instead, many integrated schools have witnessed the formation of ethnic cliques and gangs that battle other groups to defend their own identities. Changes in the law have helped to alter some discriminated attitudes. Without changes in the law, women might never have been allowed to vote, ordain Bhikkhūṇī, or be free from being prostitute and sex objects for men. Finally, **cooperative learning**, or learning that involves collaborative interactions between students, while surely of positive value to students, does not assure reduction of hostility between conflicting groups. Cooperation is usually too limited and too brief to surmount all the influences in a person’s life. To conclude, most single efforts to eliminate discrimination are too simplistic to deal with such a complex phenomenon. Researchers, then, have focused on more holistic methods of reducing ethnocentrism and cultural conflicts. They have noted that certain conditions must be met before race relations will ever improve :

- A desire to become better acquainted.
- A desire to cooperate.
- Equal economic standing and social status.
- Equal support from society.

Sociologists speculate that one reason discrimination is still around is the fact that these conditions rarely coincide.

## **Conclusion**

His Holiness the Dalai Lama contributes greatly to the empowering of women. He speaks at the Lions Club of Dharamsala, in India, claiming that "Education alone is not sufficient. Educating only the Brain is not enough. Education of warm-heartedness is important. Women should take an active role in the peacemaking. Empowerment of women is very important. I give my full support. I always feel for other people." "21st Century is a century for dialog. Proper way to build peace is we must make an effort to solve peace through meaningful dialog and paying respect to others interests. In order to promote dialog, great will and self-confidence is important. We must make an effort to strengthen compassion. When we act with real compassion for all beings, honest, transparent and truthful real dialogue brings peaceful solutions among human beings. The Empowerment of women is a peaceful solution for the 21st century. Women can play an important role in promoting peace. The 21st Century should be the Century of peace."<sup>5</sup>

Buddhist thinking, from the beginning to the present day, has maintained a deep commitment to nonviolence and to caring for others. For followers of the Buddhist way, meditation is the foundational discipline through which the nature of suffering is perceived and understood. Practitioners come to understand that war does not end by war, nor can anger be overcome by anger. Nonviolent responses to violence hold the potential for true transformation, and kindness holds out the possibility of redemption and reconciliation. Recently the Dalai Lama responded to a question about basic Buddhist practice, saying "My true religion is kindness." The fullness of this belief was exemplified by the Dalai Lama's acceptance speech at the 1989 Nobel Peace Prize ceremony: "I speak not with a feeling of anger or hatred towards those who are responsible for the immense suffering of our people and the destruction of our land, homes, and culture. They too are human beings who struggle to find happiness and deserve our compassion". Regarding nondiscrimination, the Buddha's teachings on the biological unity of the human species denotes a common humanity that is the basis for nondiscrimination. "Culture" determines what a society regards as "nature;" thus social position is not determined by innate differences of nature. Gender

## Buddhism and Current Global Challenges

and social identities are not the products of biology; rather, they are conceptualizations and reifications of repeated practices. The differences among human beings are cultural, not natural; thus what prevents people from changing their condition is not nature, but culture. The Buddha devoted his life to the problems of the human mind. Through his own direct experience, he came to see both the causes of suffering and the path to end suffering. He identified three root causes of suffering and saw that, through meditation and principled conduct, the practitioner could develop behaviors to counterbalance each of them. The three root causes are greed, hatred, and delusion, and the antidotes for these poisons are generosity, loving-kindness (*mettā*), and wisdom. Wholesome and unwholesome conditions of mind exist in all of us, and that which is unwholesome can be transformed through diligent practice and awareness. In the Buddhist view, to bring peace and security we must transform these three poisons of greed, anger, and ignorance into the three virtues of responsibility, compassion (*karuṇā*) and wisdom. Finally, the principle of nondiscrimination, based on the acceptance of a common humanity—the principle of equality of all persons—the principle of nondiscrimination means that all persons, on the basis of their humanity, must be able to enjoy and exercise their human rights. These essential human rights include the right to have access to the economic and social resources necessary for human life, the right to live safely and with dignity, and the right to be free from torture and inhumane treatment and punishment.

### End Notes :

1. Buddhism is usually divided into three main types: Theravāda Buddhism (practiced today in Thailand, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Cambodia, and Laos), Mahāyāna Buddhism (practiced today in Vietnam, China, Japan and Korea) and Vajrayāna/Tibetan Buddhism. See Skilton (1994) for a discussion of the history and doctrines of each tradition.
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# Plants in Jātaka Stories

Rumki Mondal

In the Pali Canon the *Jātaka* stories are one of the important sources of the environmental ethics. It is the tenth book of the *Khuddakanikāya* which in turn is the fifth division of the *Suttapiṭaka*. The *Jātaka* consists of 547 stories divided into 22 Nipātas according to the number of verse concerning each story. This is a collection of upwards of 547 folk-lore tales which forms part of the Buddhist canonical scriptures. These birth-stories are embedded with full of moral principles and practices which the Bodhisattva (literally Siddhartha Gotama) had observed for self-development and perfection (i.e. parami) to attain Buddhahood. These stories, in which the previous life of the Buddha often appears as animals, birds, trees or tree-spirits, teach values of self-sacrifice, compassion for those in distress, honesty, and other ethical values. The Buddha himself used *Jātaka* stories to explain to emphasise the importance of certain moral values. These richly narrated birth stories abound with poetic appreciations of nature. Passage after passage; celebrate forests, waters, and the Earth's wild creatures. Some of the stories traditionally accepted within the Theravāda tradition mention trees, usually as the central characters i.e. the Bodhisattva. In most instances, trees represent prior life-forms of persons living at the time of the Buddha. In some cases, this tree's behaviour is auspicious and has laid the foundation for later auspicious human action; in other cases, the behaviour is objectionable and helps account for heinous human behaviour committed by the Buddha's contemporaries. *Jātaka* stories from the Pali collection illustrate the wisdom or compassion exhibited by trees or animals also; and tales that contain what seems to be an inherently ecological message.

There are many events in the life of the Buddha and his discourses in the '*Tipiṭaka*' where the Buddha has expressed his views on environmental protection. As we all know, Buddha's life from the beginning to the end was closely connected with the environment - plants, rivers, mountains and other places of nature. In the ancient Buddhist period the present Bharatvarsa was also known as Jambudīpa (Mahadīpa). Its name is said to derive from a Jambu tree. 'The word Jambudvīpa literally refers to "the land of Jambu

trees”(Indian Blackberry Island) - Where ‘Jambu’ is the name of the species (also called Jambul or Indian Blackberry) and ‘dvīpa’ means ‘island’ or ‘continent.’ Continent Jambudvīpa also known as Sudarshanadvīpa. According to the Viṣṇupurāṇa (ch.2) the fruits of the Jambu tree are, to be as large as elephants and when fruits become rotten and fall upon the crest of the mountains, a river of juice is formed from their expressed juice. The river so formed is called Jambunadī (Jambu River) and flows through Jambudvīpa, whose inhabitants drink its waters. Insular continent Jambudvīpa is said to comprise nine varshas (zones) and eight significant parvatas (mountains).<sup>1</sup>

There are several words for trees in Buddhism - rukkha, taru, duma, vanaspati, (forest lords), jagatāruha (earth grown), pādapa (foot drinker) and viṭapī<sup>2</sup> In the *Jātaka* we have an early attempt to define trees “It is called a tree because it has branches. Without branches it’s just a stake.”<sup>3</sup>. “The *Paramatthajotikā* defines a forest as “a collection of trees growing in close proximity to each other”. Some of the structural components and other parts of trees referred to by the Buddha include the roots (mūla), trunk (daṇḍa or khandha), the periderm or outer bark (papatika), the phloem or inner bark (taca), sapwood (pheggu), heartwood (sara), branches (sakha), twigs (pasakha), leaves (paṇṇa or patta) and the crown (agga). There are also references to seed pods (stpatika) some of which encased the seeds surrounded by down (tula). Roots, those parts of trees and other plants that anchor them and absorb and transport water and nutrients, were identified and described. Some of the different root systems mentioned include woody roots which could be either long or short (dīghamūla and rassamūla), tap roots and lateral roots (mulāni ahogamāniyāni tiriyaṅgamāni), feeder roots (naff), spreading roots (mulāsantanaka), and hair roots (mattāni).<sup>4</sup> The *Tipiṭaka*, the Buddhist scripture, says more about plants in general and forests and trees in particular, than almost any other subject.<sup>5</sup> The Buddha had direct connection with trees, the fact that he was born under a tree, had an early spiritual experience under a **Sālarukkha** at Lumbinī garden in Kapilavatthu, became awakened under a **Asattharukkha** at Bodhgayā, preached the dhamma under an another **Asattharukkha** at Sāranātha and passed away under the twins Sularukkha at Kusīnarā But it would be a mistake to think that this was the more significant connection between the Buddha or Buddhism and trees.

‘The Buddha classified plants as either medical herbs, grasses or forest trees (osadhi, tina and vanappatayo).’<sup>6</sup> According to botanical view based on growth habit plants are broadly categorized into three. They are as follows:

- (i) **Herbs** - Herb is a short green plant. Its stem is subtle. Generally,

### Plants in Jātaka Stories

they have few branches or few branchless. These can be easily uprooted from the soil. Such as different types of grass, pālam (spinach), alāba leaf, kalambi are few examples of herbs.

(ii) **Shrubs** - Shrubs are much taller than herbs. It is a medium-sized plant of bushy, hard stems with branches. Although stems are hard, they are flexible but not fragile. Some of the common shrubs around us are rose, lemon, brinjal and henna etc.

(iii) **Trees** - Trees are big, tall plants. They have very thick and hard stems called the trunk. This trunk gives rise to many branches bearing leaves and fruits. Such as mango, cashew, banyan, nimba etc. Some trees are branchless. They have only one main stem which bears leaves, flowers and fruits all by itself, like coconut or palm tree etc.

(iv) **Creepers** - Creepers, are plants which creep on grounds. They have very delicate stems that can neither stand erect nor support all of its weight. Like watermelon, pumpkin, gourds etc.

(v) **Climbers** - Climbers are much superior than creepers. Even climbers have a very weak stem but they can climb upon some support to grow and carry their weight. These types use structures called tendrils to climb on. Such as pea plant, money plant, etc.<sup>6a</sup>

All types of plants are described in the *Jātaka* stories and other Buddhist literature. The *Jātaka* period is the landmark of the tree plantation and conservation of the forest. Gardening or fanning is quite popular among the people of this period. Most gardens were made near the monasteries and stupas.

According to the *Jātaka* stories there were many natural forests, man-made forests, sub-forests and various deer parks.<sup>7</sup> The Buddhist literature also mentioned that some of the forests are directly associated with the lord Buddha. Such as:- Jetavana, Nāgrodhavana, Mahāvana, Veluvana, Lumbinīvana, Āmravana, Ambapālīvana etc. There are no places in the *Tipiṭaka* where the Buddha authorized tree worship the way he occasionally did for worshipping gods. In Pāli tree-spirits were called rukkhadevatā, vanadevatā or āramadevatā. In the *Vānaya* He also said "People generally believe that there is life (i.e. spirits or gods) in a tree". The presences of tree-spirits are very strong Buddhist belief as seen from the *Jātaka stories*. We see in the *Kusanāli Jātaka* Bodhisattva was born as a spirit in a clump of kusa grass. In the same ground there was a beautiful wishing tree namely Mukkhaka. This wishing tree was full of spreading branches, straight stem and flower. A mightily deva king also lived on the tree as tree spirit. Bodhisattva was his intimate friend. Once king Brahma datta ordered the woodsman to excise the

wishing tree for constructing a pillar to secure his dwelling. Before cutting the tree, the woodsman would inform the tree spirit of his intentions and make offerings to it (*Jā.1,442*, IV, 153). Milk and water were poured on the roots,<sup>8</sup> garlands were hung in the branches, lamps of scented oil were burned around them and cloth was tied around their trunks (*Jā. 11,104*). There is the occasional mention of animal and even human sacrifices being made to trees. Other trees were worshipped and given offerings because the spirits were believed to grant wishes. In the *Palāsa Jātaka* we see a certain rukkhadevatā, who dwelled on the Palāsa tree was pleased with the poor Brāhmaṇa because of his prayer and worship. One day the Brāhmaṇa was sprinkling gravel and sweeping all round it, he kept its root smooth and free from grass. Then he presented it with a scented wreath of five sprays and lighting a lamp made an offering of flowers and perfume and incense. When rukkhadevatā asked him what is the reason of your worship? Brāhmaṇa told him the truth that with deepest awe such beings I revere, they guard, methinks, some sacred treasure here. The rukkhadevatā hearing these words was so pleased and gave him all the treasure. At last the rukkhadevatā advised him that by this wealth only across your poverty not your honesty.

According to some other *Jātaka* stories, sometimes even deities had to intervene to protect trees in forests from men when they were about to cut them - *Pucchumanda Jātaka*, *Vyaggha Jātaka*, *Makā-Vañija Jātaka*. The *Pucchumanda Jātaka* described, in those days robbers placed their stolen goods at the foot of trees. One day a robber having been guilty of an act of theft in an outlying hamlet of the city entered the cemetery grove. And at this time two old trees stood there, a Nimba-tree and a Bo-tree. The robber placed their stolen goods at the foot of this Nimba-tree and lay down there. The spirit of Nimba-tree thought 'if people captured this robber, they will cut off a branch and make a stake from this Nimba-tree and impale him on it. And in that case the tree will be destroyed. So I will drive the fellow away'. Then addressing him 'robber, arise! Why sleepest thou? For slumber 'tis no time, The King's men are upon thee, the avengers of thy crime'. Thus we see how a Nimba-tree spirit frightened away a robber whose presence endangered the safety of the tree. The *Jātaka* stories described that the Buddha was born again and again as tree-spirit (Bodhisattva) to protect sometime own-self and sometime other beings. As examples is the *Jambukhādaka Jātaka* the Bodhisattva became a tree sprite in a certain rose-apple grove; in *Koṭṭisāmoli Jātaka* the Bodhisattva was a tree spirit dwelling in the top of a cotton tree, in *Udumvara Jātaka* Bodhisattva also became a tree

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spirit. That some forest tracts were spared human encroachment may have sometimes been due to the fauna they sheltered. The *Vyaggha Jātaka* described the same story. This *Jātaka* says that two tree spirits who shared their forest with animals. Because of the stink of carrion left by the two predators, one of the tree spirits decided to scare his neighbours away, against the good advice of the second tree spirit. As soon as the nearby villagers noticed the absence of lion and tiger tracks 'within days they cut down the forest, made fields and brought them under the plough' (Jd.,n,356-7). There is facts that some forests were able to re-establish themselves when, whether due to natural or man-made causes, human habitation went into decline. The Buddha mentions a man hesitant across the ruins of an ancient city deep in the forest. The moral of the story is that one should know that one's peace sometimes depends upon being able to stave off the incursion of others, and that one should not disturb such a state of affairs. The animals in these stories are often depicted in a most sympathetic manner and sometimes in contrast to the greed, thoughtlessness and cruelty of humans. Even plants were sometimes attributed with having the noblest human-like qualities.

These plants give an advice to the human world that unity is the great power. We see in the *Rukkhadhamma Jātaka*, an argue had arisen regarding water rights. The Bodhisattva was born as the fairies of the Sālvana in the Himalayas. During the reign of King Vessava, the trees, shrubs, bushes, and plants were all invited to choose a new residence. The future Buddha-tree advised all his kinsfolk to shun trees that stood alone in the open and to take up their abodes in the forest. The wise vegetative spirits followed his advice, but the proud and foolish ones instead chose to dwell outside the villages and towns, to reap the benefits offered by townspeople who worship such trees. They left the forest and came to inhabit giant trees which grow in an open space. One day a mighty storm swept over the countryside. The solitary trees, despite their years of growth deep into the rich farmland, suffered greatly: their branches snapped, their trunks collapsed, and they were uprooted, flung to the earth by the tempest. But when the storm hit the Sālvana of interlacing trees where the future Buddha dwelt, fury was in vain not a tree could it overthrow. This story could be interpreted as a call to heed the lessons of the forest, to acknowledge the strength of the interconnectedness of life.

But we see a different story in *Alincitta Jātaka*. This story described that the most important resource derived from the forests was timber. This *Jātaka* story suggests that even forests remote from human habitation were being broken for timber on a large scale and in a systematic manner. According

to this story, all the carpenters from a particular carpenter's village would embark on regular trips up a river to where it ran through a wide forest. They would cut down properly large trees, shape beams and planks for house building, and put together the framework of one-story and two-story houses, numbering all the pieces from the central post outwards. When they had enough they loaded all the timber on top of boats and rowed downstream to their village. There they would build houses to order as and when they were required. Another *Jātaka* says, 'Forests are made of (potential) fire wood' (*Jā,I,289*). Once the Buddha met King Pasenadi's minister of works while he was supervising the cutting of timber in a Sāl forest (*Samyutta Nikāya*, I,179). The *Bhaddasāla Jātaka* makes the interesting comment that all the royal palaces in India were supported by numerous columns, some of which must have been wooden. It seems that the king of Benares wanted to construct a magnificent palace supported by a single column and commanded his officers to find a tree trunk big enough for the purpose. They went to the forest and located enough such trees but the state of the roads, they reported to the king, would not allow for the transportation of such a huge log (*Jā,IV,153*).

The state regarded some forests tracts as important sources of products and revenue. Where allowed, people gathered fruit, nuts, grasses, leaves, honey and leaf manure in nearby jungles and forest tracts. Forests provided them with the flowers they used in their religious ceremonies and with which they decorated themselves. 'The *Kaliṅga Bodhi Jātaka* described a mango tree on the bank of the Ganges laden with its beautiful flowers. A young girl climbed on the tree top and dropped the wreath of flowers into the water. Once the prince of Kaliṅga got a flower- wreath caught in his hair after a birth in the river. He heard the young girl was singing in a sweet voice from the mango tree. The prince approached this tree and saw a nymph like beautiful girl who was playing with all kinds of flowers gathered from the forest. She seemed to be the goddess of the mango tree.'<sup>9</sup> 'When the Buddha was living in the forest before his Enlightenment he would sometimes encounter cowherds grazing their cattle, grass-cutters, people gathering twigs and wood-cutters (*Jā,V,417*; *Majjhima Nikāya*, I,179). He observed that certain forests were thick with reeds and sara grass (*Dīgha Nikāya*, *JH,15*), both of which were used to make various household objects such as mats, ropes and brooms. People cleaned their teeth by chewing the twigs of particular trees. The Buddha spoke of the advantages of using such tooth sticks (*dantakattā*). It is good for the eyes, the breath does not have a bad smell, the taste buds are cleaned, bile and phlegm do not mix with the food, and

food becomes more palatable (*Anguttara Nikāya*, HL, 250). Twigs of the betel vine are the only wood mentioned as being used for this purpose (*Jā*, I, 232), but twigs from the Toothbrush Tree, Neem and Babul may have been used too, as they are by village folk in Bihar even today'<sup>10</sup>

'The leaves of certain trees were used to make various household articles such as baskets, fans and plates and were used as wrappers for food (*Jā*, VI, 510, S.N., V, 438). Parasols could also be made out of leaves (*Jā*, m, 79). Forest-living ascetics built themselves leaf huts (*paṇṇakuṭi*, *D.N.*, III, 94, S.N., I, 226; *Jā*, II, 72; 273) to live in. Another product of trees that a use was found for was the bark (*taca*, *vaka* or *vakkala*, *A.N.*, I, 152; *D.N.*, I, 167; *Jā*, II, 13; MN., I, 198). Household articles like fens and ropes are occasionally mentioned as being made out of bark (*Jā*, III, 204; *Vinaya Piṭaka*, II, 130). Ascetics are often described as being dressed in *vakkala* (*A.N.*, I, 240; *Jā*, II, 272). Although this is usually taken to mean a type of cloth made from bark this may not be the case; more likely it was made out of fibres from the phloem or inner bark of some type of tree or trees. *Vakkala* clothing made a rustling noise as the wearer moved (*Jā*, I, 1, 274).'<sup>11</sup> "The commentary to the *Nidānakathā* also mentions some of the benefits of this unusual type of clothing'<sup>12</sup>

The Buddha encouraged the planting of fruit trees along roads to offer both shade and food for travellers. In the *Mahā-Vāṇija Jātaka* the compassionate banyan tree possessed the boons of drinking water, food and all kinds of necessary goods. The story narrates there was a mighty banyan tree in a wild forest with cool and pleasant shade. The tree was full of moist. Merchants took shelter under this tree cut one of the branches and got pure water trickling down and they drink it. The Buddha said of a kindly hospitable person that he was 'like a great banyan tree growing on the side of roads that welcomes weary travellers with its cool shade and soothes their tiredness' (*Jā*, VI, 526). As a vital part of the ecosystem, plants give oxygen for organisms to stay alive and they are able to reduce the problem of pollution, by using carbon dioxide. They clean and filter water and help prevent soil erosion. Plants are also the basis of most food webs as producers of food for herbivores and ultimately carnivores. In short we use plants for many purposes - food, fibre, medicine, transportation and construction, fuel, managing living resources, agriculture etc. Poisons were another product derived from forests, or at least from the wild. We see in the story of the *Phala Jātaka*, poison-trees grow in a forest. This tree exactly resembles a mango tree alike in trunk, branch, leaf, flower, fruits. Not only in outward semblance, but also

in taste and smell, the fruit-ripe or unripe mimics the mango. It is certain, it is a deadly poison, and causes instant death.

The forests of the Ganges and Yamuna valley were the environmental mainstay of the several religious sects that were proliferating between the 6th and 3rd centuries B.C. 'The Buddha, and not only He alone, believed that the solitude and simple living which forest wilderness offered were essential for meditation. He encouraged monks and nuns to seek solitary lodgings in the forest'<sup>13</sup> We see in the *Arañña Jātaka*, The Bodhisattva was born in a Brāhmaṇa house hold. After his wife's death he adopted the religious life and went with his son to dwell in the forest of Himalaya. 'Some monks tried living in hollow trees and in the fork of trees (*Vin.*, I, 152). A forest-dwelling monk was advised not to settle down at the foot of a tree on a border, one used as a shrine, one from which resin or fruit was collected, one in which flying foxes roost, a hollow tree or one growing in a monastery (*Visuddhimagga.*, 14).'<sup>14</sup> The beauty of the natural world was a recurring and popular theme in the literary arts. The 'long description of the forest' from the *Vessantara Jātaka* names about a hundred plants and nearly as many animals (J3, VI, 534-39) When recited by a bard, this long passage must have created a vivid picture of the beauties of the forest and its inhabitants in the minds of the audience. Several other shorter eulogies to nature are found in the *Jātaka* and the *Theragāthā*.<sup>15</sup> The tree which not only provides sustenance and shade to man but also adds colour to his environment is truly one of the most precious gifts of Nature. In addition, they constitute a flora entirely different from that available at any other part of the globe. Thus it seems essential that in order to comprehend the relationship between trees and men of ancient India that authentic Indian literature.

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2. *Anguttaranikāya*, III, p.3; *Buddhavaṇṣa*, p.28; *Jātaka*, I, p.216; IV, p.229; VI, p.178.
3. *Jātaka*, IV, p.483.
4. *Paramatthajotikā*, p. 191. (<http://www.bhantedhanimika.net/essays/trees-in-the-buddhist-scriptures>)
5. In the *Sutta Nipāta* the aerial roots of banyan trees are called "trunk-sprung" (*khandhaja*). It was understood that roots absorb moisture and nutrition from the soil and that the sap (*oja*) moves upwards through the trunk into the branches and leaves. The *Visuddhimagga* says "When a great tree is growing on the earth, nourished by the essence of humus and, with that as condition, its roots and trunk,



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branches and shoots, foliage, flowers and fruit grow so it fills the sky and continues the tree's species until the end of the aeon, one cannot say that the essence of humus is only found in the roots but not in the trunk or in the fruit but not in the roots, and so on. And why? Because it spreads throughout the whole tree from the roots upwards." (Vism.p.688). Ibid.

6. Manu divided plants under eight classes as follows:
  1. drafty-plants bearing abundant flowers and fruits, but withering away after fructification, e.g. rice, wheat
  2. *Vanaspati*- plants bearing fruits without evident flowers.
  3. *Vṛkṣa*-trees bearing both flowers and fruits.
  4. *Guccha* - bushy herbs
  5. *Gulma* - succulent shrubs
  6. *Tṛṇa* - grasses
  7. *Pratana* - creepers which spread their stems on the ground
  8. *Valli* - climbers and entwines.

According to *Charaka* and *Suśruta Saṁhita* the plants are categorized into four classes: (1) *Vanaspati* (2) *Vṛkṣa* or *vanaspatya* (3) *Virudh* (4) *Osadhi* (Ghose, A. K. 1971. Botany: The Vedic and Post-Vedic Periods. In *4 Concise History of Science in India* (Ed) D. M. Bose, S. N. Sen and B.V. Subbarayappa. New Delhi, Indian National Science Academy, pp. 371-395).

6(a). <http://byjus.com/biology/plants>.

7. In the *Dhammapada* - Bahum ve saraṇaṃ yaṇṭi pabbatāni vanāni ca ārāma-rukkha-cetiyaṇi manussā bhayatajjitā'. (Buddhavagga, verse-188).  
"Gripped by fear people go to sacred hills, forests, groves, trees and shrines"
8. The *Āyacita-bhaktā Jataka* mentioned that the victim's Mood was poured around the foot of the tree and the entrails were draped over the branches.
9. *The Tree - Thrones of the Buddhas*, Asha, Das, Kolkata, Balaram Prakashan, 2003. p. 9 (introduction).
10. Toothbrush Tree (*Streblus asper*), Neem (*Azadirachta indica*) and Babul (*Acacia arabica*).  
*Nature and the Environment in Early Buddhism*, S. Dhammika, Singapore, Buddha Dhamma Mandala Society, 2015, p. 15-16.;
11. Vakkala might have also referred to ordinary cotton or hemp cloth coloured with a dye made from the bark of the tiriti tree (*D.N., I, 66*; *M.A., I, 343*). There are occasional references to ascetics wearing bast or wood fibres (*dāru*), which might be an alternative name for vakkala (*Ud., 6*), or wearing phalaka, which may have been wooden slats or even wood shavings (*Fm., I, 305*). These and similar unusual clothing are described as the
10. Characteristic of ascetics of other sects' and were not allowed to be worn by Buddhist monks (*Fm., I, 305*). It is difficult to identify the trees, the bark or bark fibres of which was used to make cloth. Ibid., p. 143ff.
12. It is cheap, it can be made by oneself, it is hard to get dirty and easy to wash, it is easy to mend, it is not difficult to get a new one when the old one is worn out, it is suitable for the ascetic life, thieves do not bother to steal it, it does not beautify

the wearer, it is light to wear, it is conducive to contentment, it can be obtained by righteous means and if it is lost it causes no regret (Jā.,I.9). Ibid.

13. Ibid, p. 143

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## Worship of Maṅgalā-A sāgā of Hindu Buddhist Tussle in Everday practices

Sritama Chakraborty

The period of Odishan history ninning from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> Century A.D. was a flourishing period of *Śaivism* and *Śaktism* alike, when most of the *Śakta pīthas* presently found in the State sprang up. Tantric shrines of the *Śaiva* and *Śakta* affiliation as well as Tantric Buddhist monasteries were built under the patronage of royal dynasties, awe- inspiring Tantric images signifying numerous manifestations of the godhead were carved out, Tantric text composed, Tantric ritualistic patterns and religious festivals established.<sup>1</sup> Particularly during the reign of the *Bhumakāra dynasty* (A.D. 736-945) Tantrism became the dominant religious trend in Odisha and continued to influence *Śaivism*, *Śaktism*, *Buddhism*, and even *Jainism* till the later medieval period, even though the *Gangā* and *Suryavaṃsi* monarchs, who ruled over the Kalingān empire starting from the 12<sup>th</sup> Century A.D, didn't favor the Śakta -Tantric practices in their dominions. After the *Somavaṃsi* kings, the successors of the *Bhummkāras*, had restored *Śaivism* to its prisdtfe *Āgamic* form and made it their state religion. The Imperial Gangas promoted the national cult of *Jagannātha* and fostering a syncretistic religious policy, amalgamated into it both Śaiva and Śakta trends.<sup>1</sup>

Among the eight traditional Chāṇḍī Pīṭhas of Odisha, the shrine of *Maṅgalā* (the Auspicious- one) at Kākatpur (Lat 19°59'N to Long 86° 11'41" E). *Kākatpur* is a small village in the Puri district by the Aṣṭāraṅga road. The temple is situated on the eastern bank of the river Prāchi where the *Vaiṣṇava* doctrines and rituals, starting from the Ganga epoch, formed the essence of *Jagannātha* cult and had more influenced the Śakta theological conceptions and worship practices.

Although dating, 'in its present forms, only from the 15<sup>th</sup> Century A.D, the temple of *Maṅgalā* was certainly built on the ruins of a more ancient *Śakta* shrine. Since its presiding deity is represented by an image of the Buddhist goddess *Taru* assigned to about the 10 Century A.D. During this period, the *Somavaṃsi* ruled over coastal Odisha. The pitha of *Maṅgaā* is likely to have gained popularity from at least the initial part of the *Somavaṃsi*

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period. By that time Buddhism faced a sort of disintegration in the Prāchi Valley area as well as in the whole of Odisha, so that the images of Mahāyāna Buddhist devas and devis started being venerated by the Hindu folk as the images of *Brāhmanical* divinities. Following the new trend *Maṅgalā*, a folk goddess personifying auspiciousness, may have been incorporated into the regional Hindu pantheon of Odisha on the initiative of the *Somavaṃsi* monarchs. The great revivers of Hinduism in Odisha, who may also have installed the said *Tāra* image, wonderfully carved out of chlorite stone and bearing the unmistakable mark of the later Bhuma art phase, as the presiding deity of the great Śakta temple of Kākatpur. The worshipped image of Mother Maṅgalā approximates to the iconography of the *Mahāyāna Buddhist goddess Sītāpatrī Tārā*. It represents a four - armed Devi seated in *Lalitāsana* on a double lotus cushion (Viśvapadma) below which is a row of eight female figures with accessories for worship. The goddess is crowned with a tall *kirāṇṭa-mukuta* and is adorned with very big earrings. Her upper right hand holds a disk while the lower right holds a rosary. She holds a blooming lotus in her upper left hand while an unidentifiable object is placed in her lower left, shown in the attitude of counting. As regards the mystic meaning of such attributes, the disk is generally identified by the people with the full moon (Pūrnachandra) a symbol of astro - cosmic totality, while the rosary (aksamālā) consisting of twenty- seven beads may represent as many lunar mansions or nakṣatra, the chronological determination of which was at the basis of the various Indian ritual calendars. Some of the iconographical determination of which was at the basis of the various Indian ritual calendars. Some of the iconographical determination of which was at the basis of this masterpiece of Tāntric Buddhist art of Odisha lay, thus, emphasis on the primeval 'Lunar' aspect of the supreme female principal, with this tallying with the dependent nature of the great Goddess of the Hindus as well.<sup>2</sup>

An interesting odd account of goddess Maṅgalā origin is traced from Sarala Dasa's poem "*Chandī Prāna*", which relates that Mahādevī Durgā, as the presiding deity of prosperity and happiness and bestowed of all desires, specially venerated by the womenfolk, Maṅgalā is described in some Tntric texts as sixteen years old and ever youthful. She is furthermore stated to be a variant form of Durgā. On the occasion of the ritual fast called "*Khudurukuni Osa*", observed by unmarried Oriya girls in the lunar month of Bhādrapada<sup>3</sup>, *Maṅgalā* is, in fact, worshipped in association with Durgā in the form of a composite female deity named *Khudurkuni*. Nevertheless, the iconographic features shown by *Maṅgalā* of *Kākatpur* do not correspond at all to Durgā ones, or do they approximate to the descriptions of goddess *Maṅgalā* given

in various religious texts. The cult icon presiding over the pīṭhas of *Kākatpur* is, an unique piece of sculptural art, evoking credit in the hypothesis of its Buddhist origin.

A legend runs in the *Prāchi Valley* that the representative image of Mother *Maṅgalā* was carried by sea to *Kākatpur* by a rich Oriya *sādhava*<sup>4</sup> coming from Ceylon. During the early medieval period, indeed, the merchants of Odisha were carrying on naval trade with the island of Ceylon as well as with the South- East Asian countries. *Kākatpur* was in those days one of the most important among the ancient small river - ports situated along the course of the *Prāchi*, which connected the heart of the Odisha kingdom with the Bay of Bengal. The tradition about the import of the *Maṅgalā* image from Ceylon is, however, devoid of any historical truth, for the image in question is, in all evidence, a pure specimen of Odisha sculpture art. The legend under discussion was probably created to connect the shrine of *Maṅgalā* at *Kākatpur* with the past maritime glory of the *Prāchi Valley* in such a way as to give much more importance to the shrine itself. Furthermore, it does not appear unlikely that the fancied Ceylonese origin of the *Maṅgalā* image might be actually reminiscent of the latter's primarily Buddhist character, in as much as Ceylon was, in all ages, a great center of the Buddhist religion. In the Bhuma period the *Sādhavas* of Odisha were the chief supporters of Buddhism, so much so that the image of the Buddhist *Tārā* which would have later on represented *Maṅgalā* of *Kākatpur* came naturally to be associated by the people with the maritime activities carried on by the *sādhava* communities active in the *Prāchi valley*. One of the eight perils from which *Tārā* was anciently believed to protect her devotees was shipwrecking, which circumstance made her goddess the patroness of sea traders. In a subsequent time, when the *Tārā* image in question was converted into the presiding deity of a *Brāhmaṇical Śakta pīṭha*, this function was transferred, without solution of continuity, to the Hindu goddess *Maṅgalā*.

The *parśa - devatās*<sup>5</sup> of the temple are *Viṣṇu*, *Varāha*, *Narsimha* and *Chamundā* of these images, only the last mentioned one belonged to the original *Śakta* shrine (Subsequently rebuilt), while those of the three *Vaiṣṇava deities*, coming from some collapsed *Viṣṇu* temple, were affixed to the walls of the present *Maṅgalā* temple when the latter had already become the seat of a syncretistic, *Śakta-Vaiṣṇava* form of worship.

The throne upon which the cult image of goddess *Maṅgalā* is placed has been built in such a way as to allow the first rays of the rising sun to fall at her feet every morning, causing the image to dazzle and glow. While praying and meditating before this bright statue always garlanded with

hundreds of flowers and embellished with silver ornaments, the pilgrims naturally picture *Maṅgalā* to themselves as being full of wealth and peace and fulfilling all their desires, since she is above all the goddess who bestows auspiciousness on her devotees and cares for their welfare.

It must be mentioned that goddess *Maṅgalā* although primarily venerated at the renowned *Śakta pīṭha* of Kākatpur, plays an important role in the context of the standardized folk religion in the entire State of Odisha, particularly in the village level. She was initially an autochthonous goddess who, in course of centuries, entered the fold of the Hindu religion by virtue of a process of Sanskritisation of her cult. The worship of *Maṅgalā*, adopted also by the Buddhists culture of the medieval period, is very common in every Hindu village of Odisha, where this deity is often found represented by one or more small stones placed under a sacred tree or, alternatively by a '*maṅgalā-kalasa*', which is taken as a symbol of good omen. But she is also, at the same time, worshipped in the Hindu temples in the shape of regular cult icon associated with Brāhmaṇical puṇya rites.

Animal sacrifices of the tribal or folk type were once widely associated with the worship of *Maṅgalā*, yet the gradual conversion of upper- class people to her worship and the parallel indoctrination of semi - tribal village communities to vegetarian food habits have progressively made this kind of sacrificial activity take a back seat. Thus, *Maṅgalā* has become accepted by the Hindus of all walks of life an auspicious folk deity.

The ancient origin of the cult of *Maṅgalā* at Kākatpur is still today traceable in the sacrifices of goats, sheep or fowls that take place in the premises of the temple on the occasion of *Durgā - Pujā* and on that of '*Jhāmu Yātrā*'<sup>7</sup> At any rate, since this *Śakta deity* owing to the influence of *Jagannāṭiḥa cult*, has been long since worshipped as *Parama - Vaiṣṇavi* (the supreme Śakti of the Viṣṇavas, to whom only vegetable offering can be made). The sacrificial animals are not offered to her, but on the contrary, offered to an ancient *Cāmundā* image affixed to the temple south wall and worshipped as *Dakṣiṇa Chandi*.

*Maṅgalā* originally a tribal goddess came thus, to be conceived as *Ādi Śakti*. This theological term indicates the unman fest of *Śakti* as abstract Time before the unfold of a new world through the creative process that is always initiated by *Viṣṇu*, as soon as the creative process starts, distinction arise in the manifested forms of the Goddess, all of which at the time of Pralaya<sup>9</sup>, again become converted into *Ādi Śakti*. The above - mentioned iconographic features, the full moon and the rosary symbolizing the twenty - seven nakṣatras, which distinguish the cult image of mother *Maṅgalā* from

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that of any other Hindu goddess of Odisha, well express the nature of an astro - cosmic divinity conceived as identical to *Ādi Śakti*, the aspect of the Goddess as the metaphysical beginning of all things. That the representative image of *Maṅgalā of Kākatapur* was carved by Buddhists sculptures does not appear relevant in this respect, what appears important is, on the contrary, the way the Hindu devotees have been viewing and adoring this cult icon since it was installed as the presiding deity of the *Brāhmaṇical Śakta* shrine of Kākatapur.

A very important link between the cult of *Maṅgalā* and that of *Jagannātha* is represented by the festival called '*Navakalevara*'<sup>10</sup> according to a complicated calculation of dates based on the lunar calendar. On the occasion of this most sacred ceremony, the three idols representing the Puri Trinity, which are made of Nim wood (*Azadirachta indicā*), are to be replaced by new ones. The work of collecting logs of wood for carving the new images starts in the month of Chaitra (March -April). The Daita priests of Sri *Jagannātha*, who claim their descent from Savara lineage and are considered to be the kinsfolk of the Lord, are appointed by the rājā of Puri and by the temple brāhmaṇas to go searching for the trees to be used for making the new images. They then proceed on foot to the temple of *Maṅgalā* at *Kākatapur*, where they are welcomed with a great religious procession. They spend some days in the temple worshipping, invoking and meditating on the goddess in order that she may visit them in dream and give them indications about the places where to look for the holy *Nim trees*. According to the order received from *Maṅgalā* in dream, the next day the Daita priests go to the places so located in the forest or in the open ground, select the trees, perform sacrificial functions along with some brahmanas, sit in meditation for three days, get the trees cut into logs by some carpenters and finally carry the holy logs to *Jagannātha* temple at Puri by making use of wooden cars that are pulled by themselves and by groups of devoted people from *Kākatapur*. The cult of Hingula, another eminent Śakta goddess of Odisha having a tribal origin. Since the Daita priests of Puri are believed to descend, at least for some part of their blood, from the ancient *Savara* people of which the Hill saoras of Orissa perhaps constitute one of the modern branches, it appears plausible to conclude that the standardized ritual of the priests' night stay in *Maṅgalā* temple, during which the goddess is believed to suggest them in dream the location of the *Nim trees* out of which the new wooden images representing the Jagannātha Trinity are to be carved, has initially drawn its inspiration, at a certain time during the medieval period, from ancient shamanistic practices centering round the sacred value attached by the tribal's to dream - life.

Another evidence of the strong influence exerted by the cult of Jagannātha on the pīṭha of Kākatpur from the later mediaval period onwards is constituted by the tradition according to which goddess Maṅgalā is believed to go everyday to Puri in order to enjoy the darsana of her 'son' Jagannātha. There is a large block of stone inside the Jagamohana of Maṅgalā temple which is traditionally taken to be the *visrāma* — *prastāra* (after - journey resting bed) of the goddess. The temple priests say that Maṅgalā, after returning from Puri, takes rest *for* some time on this seat every night. The cult object in question is offered with daily puṇjā and, such as it is reported, gets hollowed at the top day after day as if the goddess had the power to consume the stone which the seat is made of on account of the 'weight' of her invisible celestial body.

Maṅgalā is worshipped daily through a very elaborate ceremonial in the ambit of which aesthetic values and vegetarian tradition appear to be pre - eminent. The goddess receives six different food offerings and changes three different dresses every day. The main offerings consists of boiled rice; fried paddy or vegetables, coconut, fruit salad, curd, curries etc. The cult image of Maṅgalā is, furthermore bathed daily with the holy scented water known as *paduka* (*Hindi padodaka*) which is composed by an admixture of ghee, curd, milk, sugar camphor, sandal, and flowers. The evening ceremony held at the temple, when an offering of lamps is ' is the most spectacular one.

In addition to her usual everyday dresses, the goddess assumes two different special dresses on two special ceremonial occasions of the year. At the time of 'Snāna — yātrā' <sup>12</sup>. The image of Maṅgalā is entirely besmeared with sandalwood paste (Candanavesa) in such a way as to assume a fire complexion that contrasts very much with the normal color of the image, made of black chlorite. Once the goddess is so dressed, the bathing festival of Lord Jagannātha takes place in the premises of Maṅgalā temple (which, as earlier mentioned, include a shrine for the worship of this deity). Later on in the year, during the *Durgāpuṇjā*, the cult image of Maṅgalā is dressed in 'Sinhavāhini-Vesa' <sup>13</sup>

'Dasa — Mahāvidyā' <sup>14</sup> - puṇjā is daily performed before the large Mahāvidyā images affixed to the inner walls of the Jagamohana of Maṅgalā temple. Actually this worship pattern, followed by tradition at many other Śakta shrines of Odisha, does not seem to bear some markedly Tāntric characteristics. The Mahāvidyā sculptures set there in of recent origin.

The most famous ceremony being observed at the Śakta pīṭha of Kākatpur is the already mentioned 'Jhāmu yatra which marks the conclusion



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of the one -month '*Caitra festival*'. During the ceremony groups of non-brāhmaṇa dancing priests, (termed as ghanta patuas) play the gong (ghanta) to drive away evil forces, walk upon a pit or trench filled with burning charcoals outside *Maṅgalā* temple. They wear picture sue mythological dresses and carry a pitcher - shaped wooden container with a casket containing a small image of *Mangold* adorned with red hibiscuses and other kinds of flower offering. They also carry on their head the sacred pitcher filled with water representing the Devi in auspicious from that is *Maṅgalā*. One of the priests, wearing female garments and mask of Kālī, performs a ritual dance called '*Kālikā Nritya*' during which he is believed by the on lookers to be proceeded by the Goddess. After the conclusion of this festival some *Maṅgalā* priests start journeying through the neighboring areas carrying with them the proxy image of the goddess (a domed club). They promise the Hindu villagers immunity from attacks of smallpox and cholera in exchange for offerings and their profession of faith in *Maṅgalā*.

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3. Bhādrapada - month of August - September.
4. Sādhava -merchant.
5. Parśa- devatas - side deities.
6. Maṅgalā-kalasa - pot filled with water.
7. The famous fire - walking festival held at Kākatpur on the last Tuesday in the month of Caitra (March— April).
8. The primordial active female principal in which no duality exists and allopposites are reconciled.
9. The dissolution of the world.
10. A new built - up or assuming new bodies, held in every twelve to nineteen years in the month of Āsādhā (June - July).
11. In Nāgara style temples, the structure consists of two buildings, the main shrine taller and an adjoining shorter mandapa. The main difference between these two is the shape of the shikhara. In the main shrine, a bell shaped structure further adds to the height. In this style, the temples mainly are formed of four chambers, first the 'Garbhagrha', then second Jagmohan', third 'Natyamandir' and fourth chamber the 'Bhogamandir'.
12. The bathing festival of the deities of *Jagannātha temple* at Puri, which is held in the month of Jyestha (May - June) and is believed to have originated out of the ancient *Savara* religious culture.

13. The mask of a lion being temporarily placed below it so as to give it the appearance of a Durgā image.
14. 1. Kālī-The ultimate form of Brahman “Devourer of Time” (Supreme Deity of *Kālikula* systems), 2. *Tārā* — The Goddess as Guide and Protector, or Who Saves. Who offers the ultimate knowledge which gives salvation (also known as Neel Saraswati), 3. *Tripurā Sundarī* (*Shodashiv*) - The Goddess Who is “Beautiful in the Three Worlds” (Supreme Deity of *Srikula* systems); the “Tāntric Pārvati” or the “Mokṣa Mukta”, 4. *Bhuvaneswari* - The Goddess as World Mother, or Whose Body is the Cosmos, 5. *Bhairavi*- The Fierce Goddess, 6. *Chhinnamastā* - The self-decapitated Goddess, 7. *Dhumātī* - The Widow Goddess, or the Goddess of death, 8. *Bagaldmukhi*- The Goddess Who Paralyzes Enemies, 9. *Mataṅgi*- the Prime Minister of Lalita (in *Srikula* systems); the “Tantric Saraswati”, 10. *Kamālā* — The Lotus Goddess; the “Tantric Lakshmi”

### Web Based Source

1. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakatpur\\_Mangala\\_Temple](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kakatpur_Mangala_Temple)
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# Vasudhārā- the Buddhist Deity

Nabanita Basu

Vasudhārā or Vasundhārā is the goddess of wealth and abundance in Buddhist theology. Often referred to as the “Bearer of Treasure”, she is the Buddhist counterpart of the Hindu goddess Sri Lakshmi. Vasudhārā belongs to a category of Buddhist female deities called Buddha-mates or “Mother of all Buddha’s”, in Buddhism she is considered the embodiment of the divine female, as well as being the personification of transcendental wisdom. People of the Buddhist faith appeal to Vasudhārā for earthly riches as well as for fertility of the fields (crops) and womb (pregnancy). “Invite Vasudhārā into your home, offer her flowers and water, and recite her mantra daily to get wealth and abundance into your life. Her mantra is : Om Shri Vasudhārā Ratna Nidhana Kashetri Soha”.<sup>1</sup>

Vasudhārā’s name is rendered in some contexts as Vasudhārā (“Bearer of Treasure”). Her primary role as a bestower of bounty is seen in her epithets as “Wish-Fulfilling Tree” (Kalpa-vṛkṣa), “Perfectly Generous One” (Dana-paramita), “Giver of Wealth” (Dhanam-dada), “Dispenser of Riches” (Ratnadhara), “Lady Who Rains” (Varsani), “Maker of Good fortune” (Srikari), “Great Wish-Granting Jewel Goddess” (Cintamani-mahadevī), “Lady Who Delights in Currency and Storehouses of Rice” (Dhanyagatadhana-priya), and “Supreme Ruler of the Realm of Opulence” (Ratnadhatvisvaresvarī)."

The goddess who bestows all that is precious is also endowed with the names “Bearer of Knowledge” (Vidyadhari). “Embodiment of Perfect Wisdom” (Prajna), “Bearer of Truth” (Dharma-dharini). “Foremost among Bestowers of Knowledge” (Vidyādānā-Isvaresvari), “Knowledge Incarnate” (Jnanamurti), “Glorious Increaser of Enlightened Ones” (Sri Buddha-Vardhini), and “Revealer of Buddhist Paths” (Darsani Buddha-Marganam).<sup>3</sup> There is no inherent conflict between wealth and gnosis in the Buddhist worldview, for prosperity may well serve the persons and institutions engaged in the pursuit of wisdom.

The introduction of Vasudhārā is attributed to Shakyamuni Buddha. What follows is the origin narrative from the Vasudhārā Dharanī, also known as The Inquiry of Layman Sucandra. Sucandra approached Shakyamuni in the

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Kantaka grove in Kausambi and, confiding that he was impoverished and had many mouths to feed, requested a method whereby he could amass stores of grain, gold, silver, and gems in order to support his family and servants and engage in philanthropy. Shakyamuni disclosed that he had learned a mantra for precisely this purpose from another Buddha in an age distant past and proceeded to reveal the incantation, promising the Vasudhārā will appear in person to shower a rain of wealth and grain on anyone who memorizes, recites, writes, or simply listens to the sacred syllables. The incantation is to be accompanied by worship of Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and Vasudhara and a mandala rite. Those who undertake the invocation will attain great merit and good fortune, while places where the mantra is recited will be prospered and blessed by its enriching influence.

Sucandra was elated with the instruction and, promising to reach others what he had learned, departed to commence the practice. Soon thereafter, Shakyamuni sent his disciple Ananda to visit Sucandra. The monk, having seen Sucandra's overflowing storehouses, wanted to know how the layman had prospered so rapidly. The Buddha instructed Ananda regarding the Vasudhara dharani and extolled its powers, claiming that no god, demon, or human can impede its efficacy. He directed his disciple to practice the mantra and impart it to others "for the good of many, for the happiness of many."<sup>4</sup>

This origin story advocates both lay and monastic practice of Vasudhārā. Interestingly, in his discourse to Ananda (who represents here the monastic community), the Buddha did not emphasize the material benefits of the practice, although they are implicit in the circumstances of the teaching. Rather, he commended it as a means to alleviate suffering. Perhaps anticipating those who might wonder why a teacher of renunciation would furnish a means of attaining material prosperity, Shakyamuni declared that not only he but all Buddhas teach the Vasudhārā dhāraṇī "for the well-being of all poor people and for the removal of all fears, obstructions and calamities."<sup>5</sup>

Most emblematic of Vasudhārā is the sheaf of grain (dhaṇya-manjari) she displays in her left hand. This iconographic feature reveals her agricultural aspect, showing the provision of crops to be central to her character. In an agrarian setting, an abundant harvest is not only a source of sustenance but a primary source of wealth. The plant displayed by Vasudhārā may be grain in general or rice in particular, for both are designated as dhaṇya. Its presence proclaims that Vasudhārā's gifts include an abundant harvest. The grain-bearing goddess is eulogized as the 'mother of all beings' (bhūta-mātā), "one

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who has mother love for her worshipers” (bhakta-vatsala), and “universal mother” (sarvatra mātṛka), who fulfills her maternal role in part by fecundating crops to nourish and prosper her offspring.”<sup>6</sup>

Vasudhārā is sometimes paired with Jambhala, a male wealth deity. Several Indic images portray the two as a couple, seated or standing side by side on a plinth. Three liturgies in the Sādhnamālā describe mandates that center on the pair, surrounded by eight couples identical to themselves. Their retinues consist of yalcsas and yaksmis, supernatural beings associated with fertility and abundance. Vasudhārā may also appear with Jambhala at the center of his mandala.<sup>7</sup> Pratapāditya Pal notes the semblance between Vasudhārā and Jambhala as a couple widely worshipped in Buddhist contexts during the Kusana and Gupta periods, namely and even equitable with one another. Hāriti and Kubera were supplicated for wealth, progeny, and other forms of prosperity. Thus, Vasudhārā and Jambhala appear to have replaced the earlier couple in the evolving Mahāyāna pantheon, a shift discernible around the eighth or ninth century.<sup>8</sup>

Vasudhārā also appears independently as the center of her own mandalas. the simplest is a fivefold configuration in which she has four emanations identical in appearance to herself : Sri Vasudhārā, Vasusri, Vasumukhi, and Vasumatisri.<sup>9</sup> The dhyana describes the goddess with the figure of dhyani Buddha Aksobhya as follows :

**“Vasudharam bhagavatim dhyat, kanakavarnam sakalalankarava-tim  
dvirastavarsakrtim daksinakarena varadam, vamakarena  
dhyanamamjaridharam Aksobhyadharinim. Purato bhagavatim  
Srivasundharam dakshinato vasusriyam paschimatah srivasumukhim,  
vamato vasujmati-sriyam etascadyakasarabijah  
svanayikasamanarupascintanīyah.”**<sup>10</sup>

When Vasudhārā bears the image of dhyāni Buddha Ratnasambhava the sādhana describes her as follows :

**“Pita-vam-karaparinatam dvibhujaikamukhim pitam  
navayauvanabharanavastravibhusitam  
dhyanamamjarininaratnavarsamanaghatavamahastam daksinena varadam  
anekasakhijana-panvrtam visvapadmacandrasanastham  
Ratnasambhavamukutinim.....nispadya”**

She is two armed, one faced, of yellow complexion, is in the prime of youth and is decked in all sorts of ornaments and garments. She carries in her left hand the ears of corn on a vessel showering gems, while the right exhibits the varada mudra. She is surrounded by many lady friends' rests on the moon over the double lotus, and bears the image of Ratnasambhava on her crown.<sup>11</sup>

Vasudhārā is sometimes represented as one faced and six armed, and as sitting in the latta attitude. In the three right hands she shows the namaskārā mudra, the varada mudra and the ears of corn. The first left hand has the book, the second the ears of corn, and the third on the lap a flame, she is beautifully decked in ornaments and her expression is truly peaceful.<sup>12</sup>

Vasudhārā is the earth goddess, most commonly known as Bhumidevi or Prthivi. Vasudhārā inherits the mantle of mother earth as a "bearer of treasure" (Vasundhārā) and font of maternal sustenance. Vasudhārā's role as a provider of bountry recalls the nature of the earth goddess as a 'repository of gems' (ratnagarbha), "source of rivhes" (vasudhā), "bestower of weath" (vasuda), and "treasure store" (vasumati).<sup>13</sup>

The conception of Vasudhārā as a "stream of wealth (Vasudhārā) and as the lady who rains" (Varsani), showering grain and gems from her vase of plenty, dovetails with descriptions of the earth goddess as one who rains, flows, and pours forth her bountry. The atharva Veda invokes mother earth, as the "lady of many streams" (bhuridhara), to 'pour out for us honey,' "lustrate us with splendor," and "yield a thousand streams of treasure."<sup>14</sup>

Vasudhārā's color further evinces her association with Bhumidevi, who is known as the "golden-breasted one" (hiranya-vaksa), possessor of nutritive soil, goddess, too, is the 'mother of plants' (mataran osadhinam), the one who is ploughed, the source of grain and food<sup>15</sup>. Vasudhārā retains the agricultural resonance of her namesake through her association with cultivated plant life.

The earth goddess herself, under the name Prthivi, appeared in earlier Buddhist art and literature as a participant in Shakyamuni's enlightenment.<sup>16</sup>

Vasudhārā is particularly popular in Nepali Buddhism among the Buddhist Newars of the Kathmandu valley. In this region she is a common household deity. This is known from the countless number of bronzes and paintings found representing Her. These images are small in size, typically 18cm or smaller. Because of their small size it is known that these images were primarily for private use, namely household veneration of the Goddess. Additionally, there is a cult dedicated to her worship followed by the Buddhist

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Newars. They believe that her veneration will generally bring good fortune. Followers of this cult believe that her worship brings wealth and stability. Despite the strong following of this cult by the Buddhist Newars, unfortunately now is declined.

One of the earliest Nepalese representations of Vasudhārā is a Paubha (textile art depicting Hindu and Buddhist images on coarse cotton), dating back to 1015 C.E. This Paubha is known as the mandala of Vasudhārā. The goddess is the central image of this mandala, which depicts scenes of dedication, ritual initiation, festive music, and dance associated with her worship. The mandala teaches the importance of worshipping Vasudhārā primarily through the narrative of a non-believer whom she converted to belief.<sup>17</sup>

Vasudhārā is also an important deity in Tibetan Buddhism. In Tibet, her worship is limited to both lay and monastic life. Tibetan monastic life regards Vasudhārā as a 'benefactor of the laity' and instead primarily engages in the worship of the goddess for all their needs.<sup>18</sup>

Vasudhārā is often compared to the Hindu goddess Lakshmi. For both are bestowers of wealth, good fortune, and agricultural abundance. As goddess of wealth both deities have a similar iconography and are worshipped for their role in an abundant harvest. Both assume a golden hue in artistic representations, perform the same mudra, and hold similar objects. It is believed that the convention of depicting Vasudhārā standing on vases originated from earlier representations of Lakshmi. The mantra of Lakshmi is "Om Hrim Shri Lakshmiḥ Namah".<sup>19</sup>

The divine role of Vasudhārā finds ample support in Buddhist doctrine. It is doubtful, however, that the majority of worshippers over the centuries required philosophical justification for their veneration. Rather, as the same reasons they had propitiated Yaksas, Yaksinis, Lakshmi, Hariti, and Kubera in earlier eras. For many Vasudhārā was in all likelihood a manifestation of mother and whose munificent, cornucopian nature enabled her to provide whatever they might require. Whether they entreated her for wealth, bountiful crops, or enlightenment, they have found in her a divinity deducted to the nourishment and enrichment of the human spirit on every level.<sup>20</sup>

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## Some Tibetan Archaic Legends Emerged from the Indian Sources

**Rituparna Ghosh**

Tibet, Land of black magic, and centre of several mystical stories is considered Shangri-la of east, the place of eternal youth. Though India and Tibet have vast differences they are closely related with each other. It is strange that in spite of having this vast differences between them, the Tibetans chose to accept not only the Indian Buddhism, but their Tibetan script, culture, education, literature, grammar all are based on Indian sources. And, nay, most of Tibetan myths and legends are traced to Indian origins.

On the subject of Tibetan myths and legends, Tibetan historians differ in their opinions. It is said that during the old days Tibet was simply a stretch of the sea. It is therefore, believed that during the first visit of Pha-dam-pa (Buddha) to Tibet, it was found to be in the midst of water. (Pathak 1974 : 1)

It is the common swaying in Tibet that the population and first king of Tibet-came originally from India. Surprisingly, the Tibetan historians try to substantiate even these claims by scriptural evidences, by which are meant the evidences of Mahāyāna texts. (Chattopadhyaya 1967: 151) Tibetans have traditionally considered their ancestors to be of Indian origin. Some Tibetan scholars also believe that their nation has Indian roots. Some popular myth of early Tibet also contends that its first king came from India. Paṇḍit Sarat Chandra Das presented these legends very nicely. One of the warrior princes or military chiefs, named Rupati participated in the famous war of the Pāṇḍavas with the Kauravas, as described in the Indian epic “Mahabharata”. He fought on the side of the Kauravas and, after their defeat fled towards the snowy country of Tibet. For fear of being pursued by his suzerain, the chief of the Kauravas, for deserting the field, in the disguise of women, and with only one thousand followers took shelter in Tibet. He found the country, Pugyal, (for such was the ancient name of the Tibet, which in later times was converted to Bod.) widely peopled by a race of mankind still in a primitive state. They welcomed as their king. By his gentle and peaceful performance he won their affection and ruled over them for many years. Under his and

his descendants' rule the people multiplied, enjoyed prosperity and developed the arts. (Das 1984 : 25).

A tradition from the *Maṇi ka'-bum* (Ibid : 26) (one of the oldest legendary works) states that the Tibetan people descended from tribes of monkeys that developed gradually into human beings. According to Bu-ston and Sum-pa, the original myth asserts that Tibetan people descended from a male monkey, who was, an incarnate of the Avalokiteśvara. Following Rockhill, Waddell says that the name given to this monkey ancestor is Hilumandju, "evidently intended for Hanumānji, the Hindu monkey-god". (Chattopadhyaya 1967: 152) It is said that Avalokiteśvara's (Phyan ras gzigs, pronounced "Chenrézi") (Power 1995: 140) first earthly embodiment is a mythic monkey who is born from light radiating from his left hand for religious cultivation in the high plateau. He lived in mountain cave as a celibate yogi and practicing meditation but a female rock demon or ogress eagerly approached him to marry her 'for the benefit of sentient beings'. Thinking that she was alone, she wailed piteously for a mate, and when the monkey heard her cries he was filled with compassion and he became her companion. Their union produced six offspring, who were born without tails and walked upright. The monkey ancestor introduces his hungry offspring to agriculture and through the cultivation and consumption of grain the monkey youngsters gradually acquired human shape and became the people of land of snow. After planting the seeds of the Tibetan race, Avalokiteśvara continued to take an interest in the spiritual development of the country. It would become the home of the Dharma and that its natural treasures would become resources to support the prosperity of the people. The tribes flourished, spreading into the valley and across the mountainsides.

According to the different mythse and fables the Tibetans generally consider both the progenitors and the first king of Tibet are Indian precursors. Although the Buddhist historians considered the first king a Bodhisattva who appeared in Tibet to prepare the way for the Dharma, they agreed with the Ron tradition about the unusual powers of the early kings. Paṇḍit Sarat Chandra Das mentioned that "In the sacred books of Kālacakra, Mañjuśrī mūla tantra and Aṣṭa-sāhasrikā, Buddha foretold that his religion would be widely diffused in the snowy country of the north, where many Saints would also appear." (Das 1984: 26).

The chronicle of Ladakh translated by Francke gives a lengthy account of the first king of Tibet. According to it, the original Indian name of gñā'-khri btsan-po, was Buddhaśrī and, though he was one of the five sons of Prasenajit, the king of Kośala (Śuddhodana), he was "certainly a Śākya of

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Gautama". (Chattopadhyaya 1967: 155) S.C. Das says that, "four hundred and seventeen years, according to Buston's chronology, after the Nirvāṇa of Buddha, in the year 416 B.C., was born in India, Nah-Thi-tsanpo, the first of the Tibetan kings who established universal sway over Tibet. (Sharma and Sharma 1997: -55) According to legend, Nathi-tsanpo or gÑa'-khri btsan-po, built Tibet's first house and began introducing Indian civilization. He and lineage of kings that descended from him extended their control over the whole Tibet. This lineage came to be known as the Chogyal dynasty. Some sources tell such a story about the fifth son of Bimbisara's youngest son, some favour the lineage of Śatāṇika (dMag-brgyad-pa), father of King Sharba of Vatsa. Another mythical account of the first Tibetan king, gNya-khri-btsan-po, mirrors the indigenous Tibetan cult of the mountain and the mountain-gods that is closely connected to the Tibetan royal dynasty. The king was believed to be of divine origin, and descended respectively from the heaven and the mountain. This idea is founded in the cult of the mountain which even nowadays plays a dominant role in the world-view of the small Tibetan communities which usually live in villages situated at the base of a mountain. (Heirman 2007: 309).

Alaka Chattopadhyaya mentioned "the Bon tradition also shows unmistakable signs of Indian influence in the legend concerning the first king of Tibet. The rGyral-rabs-bon-gyi-'byuñ-gnas, considered to be a Bon chronicle, gives many Mahābhārata tales in this connection and considers the first king of Tibet to be son of Pāṇḍu and Krasṇa. (Chattopadhyaya 1967: 155).

S.C. Das explained this legend very nicely in his book. "The fifth son of king Prasenajit of Kośala was born with obliquely drawn eyes and light blue eye-brows of the colour of turquoise. As soon as he came out of his mother's womb, the infant was found possessed of webbed fingers and two rows teeth, fully developed, and white as a conch shell. Apprehending great evil from such ominous sign in the infant, the parents packed it up in a copper vessel and floated it away on the river Gaṅgā. A farmer, finding it, carried it to his wife who nursed it. Being a simple-hearted man, he did not try to pass off the child as his own, but revealed the truth; and the strange story of the forlorn royal child became known to all. Informed of the antecedents of his life -how he had been thrown into the Gaṅgā by his royal parents and nursed by the good farmer's wife- the youth's mind was overcast with sorrow and thoughtfulness. Being born a prince, he could not bend his mind to apply itself to the lowly pursuits of a farmer's life. After passing many a day in anxiety and melancholy, he quitted the farmer's house, bidding

his country a mournful farewell, with a firm determination either to reign as a king or not to live at all. He proceeded northward to the Himālaya Mountains subsisting on wild fruit. Unmindful of difficulties of a mountain journey or of death, he travelled further north, till by the blessing of Ārya Chenressing he arrived at the summit of the Lhari snowy mountains of Tibet and surveyed the surrounding regions. His heart was delighted on observing land on the north, and gradually descending as it were from heaven, down the slopes, he arrived at Tsari-thari (In the Province of dUs) a great plateau with four passages' on its four sides. Here he was met by many natives, who, struck with the graceful looks of the stranger, asked him respectfully, who he was, and where he came from. He replied to them by signs (for he knew not their language) that he was a prince, and pointing his finger towards the top of Lhari, he showed the direction he had come from. The Tibetans, who were sure they had seen him come from the direction of heaven, took him for a god who had descended from the celestial regions. Prostrating themselves before him, they entreated him to be their king, an offer which he gladly accepted. Then placing him on a chair, they carried him in solemn procession to the central country. From being borne on the back of men, seated on a chair, he was called by the name of Nathi-tsanpo." (Das 1984: 28)

S.C. Das also says that "during the reigns of twenty six generations of kings, counted from Nathi-tsan po the first of Tibetan kings to Namri-sron-tsan Buddhism was unknown in Tibet". He also says that "in the 27th generation of the royal succession that the Bon religion rose to the zenith of its power and when the sun of Buddhism was shining in its meridian lustre all over Jambudvīpa, snow-girdled Tibet remained buried in the impenetrable darkness of Bon mysticism". (Chattopadhyaya 1967: 164)

In the '*mKhas-pa'i-dga'-ston*' the historian dPa'-bo-gtsug-lag mentions all in all twenty-seven kings before the advent of king Lha-Tho-thori-Nān-tsan during whose reign the sacred Buddhist relics fell from the sky. (Heirman 2007: 310). In 441 A.D. (Das 1984: 30) the 28th king of the Chogyal Dynasty, Lha-Tho-thori-Nān-tsan, who was well-known as an incarnation on Sāmantabhadra, (Sharma and Sharma 1997: 55.) , when he reached the 80<sup>th</sup> year of his age, in the year 521 A.D. (Das 1984: 31), received some Buddhist scriptures and religious things from heaven. These were

- (i) Dode-Ssamatog (Sūtrānta Piṭaka).
- (ii) Ser-kyi-Chhorten (a golden miniature shrine).
- (iii) Paṇ-koṅ Chhyagya-chhen po (a sacred treatise on palmistry and mysticism).
- (iv) Cintāmoṇi Norpo and phorpa (a Cintāmoṇi gemand cup).

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He did not understand the meaning of the scriptures but perceived that they and the sacred objects were things of great value and treated them with great reverence. As the king, sitting in council with his ministers, was debating on the value and merit of the divine gifts there was heard a voice from heaven, saying that in the fifth generation the meaning of the contents should be revealed. This was the first appearance of Buddhist scriptures in Tibet. The legend might hint as a first contact of the Tibetans with Buddhism much earlier than later historiography claims. The reign of Lha-Tho-thori, although not proven historically, can be approximately dated to the fifth century. According to Tibetan historians the fifth generation may be the first religious king, named the great Sroñ-tsan Gampo, who was regarded as a very spiritual and positive leader. He was born A.D. 600/617 (Ibid: 32). On the crown of his head there was an outgrowth believed to be a symbolic representation of Buddha Amitābha, and he used to cover it with a red stain head band. In addition to introducing the Buddhist practice to the land of Tibet, King Sroñtsan Gampo had some Buddhist scriptures and many images of the Buddha. During this period were discovered, in certain caverns of rocks and recesses of mountains, many self-created images of Chenresing, the divine mother Tārā, Hayagriva and other gods, besides many inscriptions including the six mystic syllables: Om mani-padmeum. (Ibid: 33). This is Tibetan Buddhist religion or practice which is deeply rooted in Indian Mahāyāna Buddhist religion.

When Indian Buddhism reached Tibet, it encountered religion called Bon which is the ancient, native, mixture of shamanism, magic, and primitive nature worship as well as a completely different culture and way of life. Buddhism emerged as victor but nevertheless Bon has remained a living tradition until the present day. Buddhism, after being introduced, became the state religion of Tibet during the reign of first religious king, when the story moves from colourful legend into the realm of history. The Tibetan became prolific translators of Indian Buddhist texts, which are so important for a complete understanding of the development of Indian Buddhist philosophy from the period of lost Indian history. It is evidently true that after this time Indian Buddhist myths and legends became embroiled with Tibetan lengess.

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# Kataragama : A Catalyst for Change

**Sibani Barman**

Historical evidence shows that Sri-Lanka always had four guardian deities<sup>1</sup>. They guard the Buddha's Tooth relic in Kandy and thus also the welfare and stability of all Buddhists in Sri-Lanka. According to Mahavamsa, the Buddha entrusted the care of his religion (which he predicted would survive in Sri-Lanka) to Sakra, the king of gods, and Sakra in turn gave the charge of it to Viṣṇu. Buddha's authority is still effective by deligation through warrants (varam). The Buddha gave the warrant to Sakra and he gave one to Viṣṇu, and all authority even that of demons, is thus handed down from the top. Viṣṇu shares the overlordship of Sri-Lanka with three other deities; the territory is partitioned among them. The three to join Viṣṇu vary and come from a list of five: Nātha, Pattini, Saman, Vibhisana and Kataramagama. A set of twelve gods below the four gods in the hierarchy derive their warrants from them. These twelve gods are less powerful and less moral than the Four. The twelve gods are hard to determine and defied local lords<sup>2</sup>. They in turn license the demons and other evil spirits.

The god Nātha, who was associated especially with Sinhala royalty, became virtually obsolescent when Sinhala monarchy was destroyed in 1815. He is often identified with the next Buddha Maitreya, though originally he was identified with the Bodhisattva (i.e. future Buddha) Avalokitesvara<sup>3</sup>. All Four Warrant Gods should be Bodhisattvas because they have to guard the Island of Sri-Lanka. All of them are on the way to a final existence as a Buddha, but they must be at very different stages along the path. Viṣṇu is at the foremost position in this path of saiiictification and is thus felt to be a Bodhisattva. Pattini being female will have to be reborn as a male before becoming a Buddha. Vibhisana is not an important deity nowadays. The last one in this path is Kataragama, who is renowned for doing bad acts and so has a long way to achieve Buddhahood. Structually, Kataragama is a Bodhisattva, but he does not have the virtuous and compassionate character normally associated with that status.

In modern Sri-Lanka the religious centre that attracts the most indigeneous visitors and is the greatest focus of interest and emotion is Kataragama, an ancient shrine situated far from any city in the scrub jungle in the extreme

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south-east corner of the Island. Its annual festival starts on the first day of the new moon (pura palaviya) of the month of Āsāḷa (generally July-August) and end with 'water cutting' and 'water sports' on the morning after the full moon (ava palaviya). It is the most important religious occasion of the year. The pageant of the Temple of the Tooth' in Kandy is held during the same season. This is a great festival which attracts international tourists and hordes of Sinhala people, especially from the surrounding Kandyan village go to watch it. But nowadays it is more a cultural spectacle and an entertainment than an object of peity. Kataragama offers entertainment too; but going there is considered a serious business. Moreover Kataragama is now busy throughout the year and is visited by people of all social classes and all nominal religious affiliations.

Mr. Nevil referred to a local legend that it was at Kataragama that Skanda and his forces defeated the Asras; and that he also met Valliyāmmā and married her here, after she had been adopted in a Vedda family Kataragama is well endowed with Buddhist sacralia. Tissamahārāma, twelve miles away, is one of the traditional sixteen sites of Buddhist pilgrimage in Sri-Lanka and is rich in historical associations. According to national chronicles, it is from this part of the Island; King Duṭṭhagāmaṇi in the 2nd century B.C. set out on his successful venture to reconquer his capital, Anuradhapura. Another large Buddhist stupa, the Kiri -Vehera, stands less than a quarter of a mile from the Kataragama shrine (locally called Mahadevale, 'the Great Shrine', though physically it is small), and the shrine itself stands virtually in the shade of a large Bo-Tree. The shrines popularity with Buddhists is recent. It was connected to Tissamahārāma by a paved road in 1949 and by bus in 1952. It was after this that Buddhists arrived in mass and soon came to outnumber Hindus. In 1973 the official estimate was that, 800,000 pilgrims visited the shrine, which means about one in every 27 people<sup>4</sup>. However, the numbers during the festival season vary from year to year, depending on political and economic vicissitudes.

The sacred area of Kataragama is across a small river, the Māṇik-Gaṅgā. The main shrine of the god is a small unimpressive building; next to it is yet smaller shrine for the god's elder brother, Gaṇeś'a, and close to Gaṇeśa's shrine are recently constructed shrines for Viṣṇu and the Buddha. The area of the main shrine is connected to the shrine of the god's mistress Valli Āmmā by a narrow street a few hundred yards long. The back of the main shrine is connected by a similar street to the ancient Buddhist stupa, the Kiri-Vehera with its beautiful white dome dominating the landscape. On the left of the god's shrine, but physically separates the shrine of his legitimate



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spouse Devasenā or Tevani-Āmmā. This shrine is of considerable importance for the Hindus, but not for the Buddhists. There are many other subsidiary shrines scattered over the sacred place.

**The myths of Kataragama<sup>5</sup>:** Once mother Ūmā summoned the god Skanda and his brother Gaṇeśa to circle the world and told them that whoever won the race would be rewarded by a golden mango. Skanda impulsively went around the world on his peacock vehicle, while Ganesa simply circled around his mother. Naturally, Gaṇeśa won the mango and Skanda, chagrined, left his mother and his legitimate wife Devasenā (known in popular parlance as Tevani Āmmā) and came to Sri-Lankā. Two daughter of Viṣṇu performed 'tapas' (austerities)....to be wed to Murukān. By the grace of Murukān, one of them was born as the daughter of Indra and raised by his white elephant. She was named Tevayāṇai. After the war in which Murukān defeated the asura Surapadma, Indra gave his daughter in marriage to Murukān.

The second daughter was born to a deer impregnated by the lastful glance of the sage Śivamuni, who was performing 'tapas' on Vallimalai. Seeing that the girl, who was born with bangles of fine workmanship on her arms, was not of her own kind, the deer abandoned her in the pit in which she had given birth. There he was found by the lord of the Kuravar hunters, Nampy, who longed for a daughter. The hunter chief adopted her and named her Valli, since she was born in a pit from which old men scrape the roots of the Valli.

When Valli reached the age of twelve, she was sent to guard the ripening millet from a raised platform. She frightened away birds and beasts with a sling-shot and the cry of ālolam. To grant her grace, Muruklin came from Kantavarai to taṇikai. There he was met by Nārada, who sang the praises of Valli. Murukān sent Nārada away and placed within himself the grievous disease of love. Taking the form of a hunter, the love sick god went to the millet fields and there beheld Valli. He said to her,—”Lady, hear me -did Brahmā fail to provide those barbarians with knowledge, that they have made you sit here guarding the millet? Tell me your name; or if you will not say, tell me the name of your village; or if you not tell me even that, then show me the way thither.” As he was pleading, her father suddenly arrived with her retinue of hunters, and Murukān transformed himself into a veṅkai tree. Nampi gave his daughter some valli roots, mango honey, and the milk of a white cow. Then the hunters noticed the new tree. “This tree was never before; no good will come of it,” they said, and made preparations to cut it down and dig up its roots. Nampi stopped them. “How did this tree come to be here? He asked, scrutinizing the face of his daughter. Alarmed, Valli

said, "I do not know how it came; it appeared, I think like magic (mayam). I have been trembling at the thought that something that was not here before has sprung up so suddenly."

"Be not afraid; the tree came here to be a sweet companion for you," said the hunter, and left with his men. Murukān resumed human form and said, "Daughter of the Kuravar, I shall never leave you. How could anyone depart from you, who are like life to a body? My life is in your hands. Watching the fields is low, demanding work; come with me, and the very women of heaven will worship you, and I will give you perfect gifts."

The daughter of the hunters understood. "I am but a humble girl who guards the fields of millet," she said, ashamed. "You are a leader who rules the whole world. Is it not wrong.....for you even to speak of embracing me?"

Suddenly the drums of the hunters were heard. Valli urged Murukān to flee; instead he transformed himself into an old ascetic. He bowed to Nampi, and the hunter's lord asked what he desired. "I have come to rid myself of age and my heart of its delusion; I wish to bath in the Kumari (spring) of this in your mountain" replied the god. Said Nampi, "Father, bathe in that tirtha (sacred bathing place) and be a companion to our daughter, who is alone." He gave Valli fresh fruits and millet and departed.

The old man asked Valli for food, and, when she had given him from her honey and fruits, he complained of thirst. She told him of a spring on the mountain, on the other side of seven hills; he asked her to show him the way there. He drank from the spring as if parched by the heat; then he asked her to satisfy his desire. "You are saying things which must not be said; if the hunters knew, they would cause you harm. Are you mad, that you speak without understanding?" Saying this Valli hastened away. Murukan watching her go, thought of his elephant headed brother Ganes'a. Ganes'a took the form of a wild elephant in Valli's path. She fled' back to the arms of the old man: "Save me and I will do as you wish!" Murukān embraced her and revealed to her his true form.

Valli returned to the millet fields. Her companion noticed the change in her manner. Murukān appeared again as a hunter and asked the companion if she had seen a wild elephant go past. Guessing he was really seeking Valli, she told him to leave, lest the fierce hunters take his life. He threatened to mount the matal hobby-horse<sup>6</sup> and ride through the streets of the village if he were not allowed to meet Valli; succumbing to this threat, the companion became an accomplice to their secret union.

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When the millet was ripe, the hunters, preparing for their harvest, sent Vaḷḷi back to the village. She pined for her lover, and her foster mother noticed that she was not well. They locked her in the house and consulted women (skilled in divination). "She is possessed by the spirit (cūr) of these mountain slopes",— they said, not knowing her to be possessed by the enemy of Cur<sup>7</sup>. The hunters therefore held a ceremony of ecstatic dance...for Murukān. During the dance, the god descended upon the wild dancer... and indicated by signs that he had taken possession of Vaḷḷi, while she was out in the fields, but that her sickness would depart if he were worshipped. No sooner was this uttered than Vaḷḷi arose restored. Her foster mother and mother praised Murukān.

Not finding Vaḷḷi in the fields, Murukān lamented and wandered over the mountain. At midnight he stood outside the hut of Nampy. Vaḷḷi's companion saw him there and urged him to elope with his beloved. With her help the couple were united and fled the village.

In the morning they were pursued by the angry Kuravar, who found them in a grove. They showered arrows at Murukān, but at the crow of his cock they all fell dead. Vaḷḷi mourned her relatives and, at Nārada's urging, Murukān revived them and agreed to their request that he returned to the village and marry Vaḷḷi in a proper ceremony.

The Vaddas, Sinhallas, and Tamils of Sri-Lanka have all localized the myth in Kataragama. The events in the myth occurred at Kataragama are also well known in South India and have influenced their traditions. According to Zvelebil, in the earliest Tamil literature Skanda was known as Ceylon and later as Murugan (youthful), a deity associated with the mountain regions. It was much later that he was fused with the Sanskritic deity Skanda, alias Kumara<sup>8</sup>. The word Kanda is not the Sinhalicization of Skanda. It is the Sinhala word for 'mountain'. Sinhala mythology refers to his six separate heads being put together by his mother (or father) into a "mountain of heads". According to Seligmanns, Skanda was fused with the attributes of a popular mountain deity of the Sinhallas and Vaddas known as Kande Deviyo (the god of the mountain), and that the unimposing shrine for Skanda once may have been a shrine for Kande-Deviyo<sup>9</sup>. In South India popular shrines for Skanda like Palani are located in mountains among wild people. According to many scholars -the marriage of Vaḷḷi Āmmā, the wild woman with Skanda symbolically indicate an articulation of hunters (wild people) into the larger society through the mythic and ritual order dominated by peasant cultivators.

It is not possible to trace the vicissitudes of the Kataragama cult in ancient and medieval times, but the deity has long been known in Sri-Lanka.

The Mahāvam̐sa first clearly referred to this god in the seventh century. While uttering incantations to the god, a prince angered him, and the peacock on which the god was riding pecked out his eye<sup>10</sup>. This image of the god has changed a little, now the god can give magic power to his devotees, but any slight lack of devotion or inadvertent irreverence will provoke his wrath. Upto the fourteenth century there is a little reference to his popularity as a member of the public pantheon or as one of the guardian deities. Parānavitana in his discussion of the civilization of medieval Sri-Lanka says that reference to Viṣṇu (Upalvan), Saman, Vibhisana and Skanda are found in the literature and inscriptions of the fourteenth century<sup>11</sup>. The Lankatilaka inscription of the mid fourteenth century refers to images of this god and others to be installed in that temple. Other fourteenth-century references like the Nikāya Samgraha clearly refer to Skanda kumar along with Upalvan (Viṣṇu), Saman, and Vibhisana as the four guardian deities of the land<sup>12</sup>. By the fifteenth century the deity is well known, and there are references to him in the SaKdesa (epistolary poem) literature of the time. This literature and popular religious songs also refer to a shrine dedicated to him in the fifteenth-century kingdom of Kotte, south of that city. From the sixteenth century onwards references to Skanda increase, and there is no question of his importance in the Sinhala pantheon. The Jinakālamāli, written in Siam in 1516, refers to Kataragama as one of the guardian gods of Sri-Lanka<sup>13</sup>. By this period the god was known by the name of his central shrine at Kataragama. Earlier he was known as Kurnara or Mahasena or Kanda Kumara.

A pilgrim has to cross the river Mānik-Ganga to reach the sacred area of Kataragama. Near the river, a large number of shops and stands swelling puḷā-vatti, or trays of offerings, generally consisting of various kinds of fruits and other religious wares are seen to be displayed colourfully. The shops are normally decorated with the god's colour, red. There are 'kavadi' stands also, where one can rent a kavadi, a peacock arch of the god. The devotee generally abthes in the river and joins a kavadi group, who then dance all the way up to the god's shrine and other shrines to the accompaniment of exuberant dance music. Crossing the river itself is a symbolic act. The central drama of the annual festival is the grand procession that leaves the main shrine for the Valli shrine every night for fifteen days. It celebrates the god's joyous union with his mistress Valli Āmmā. A notable feature of this pageant is that the god does not visit the shrine of his first wife and legitimate spouse, Tevani Āmmā (Devasenā).

The fortnight pageant culminates with the ritual of water cutting, which ordinary people believe commemorates the washing of the deity's clothes

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polluted by sex. Originally the rite was intended to control the element of water in the environment. After the water cutting the assembled throng let themselves go. They sport in the water (*diya keliya*) and splash themselves and each other, and there is a cathartic and exuberant display of emotion. The pageant celebrates the god's passion and sensuality; it is a glorification of the life of the senses. The *kāvaḍi* dancers, dance before the god, men and women together in groups, young and old, many of them lost in ecstasy. In contrast with these, a number of penitents suffer self humiliation and self-torture before the god. The worship of god takes two emotional directions. Joy, celebration, and catharsis are to be seen in the *kāvaḍi* dancing and water cutting; tension and agony in the fire walking, rolling in the hot sands and even more violent form of self mortification and mutilation. These piacular activities are no longer confined entirely to Hindus and Muslims; but for the most part the Buddhists remained awed spectators. For the typical Sinhala Buddhists the most significant aspect of the festival is the passion and the sensuality, the celebration of the god's illicit love life.

But Kataragama cannot be studied in isolation of the Buddhist part of the complex. The pilgrim pays the conventional homage to the deity, an offering of fruit, and then goes to the Kiri-Vehera, the Buddhist stupa. In the street, connecting the shrine of Kataragama to the Buddhist stupa the pilgrim has to confront the beggars and destitutes. Here are the lame, the decrepit, bodies riddle with sores, the sick and aged hovering near the death's door.

The contrast in ethos is dramatic: the pilgrim is confronted with another aspect of worldly life—suffering, impermanence. Here the shops and vendors sell almost nothing but white and red lotuses, Buddhist symbols of purity. Then he reaches the Kiri-Vehera, an impressive white stupa. The pilgrim now recites the Pali verses praising the Buddha and recalling the impermanence of all physical things. The noise and bustle of the god's shrine are not heard here. Here the atmosphere is—calm, serenity, stillness.

Kataragama has become a great melting pot of Sri-Lankan society. It is the one place where all the religion of the nation—Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Catholic and Protestant—meet and mutually influence one another. The different kinds of groups who congregate here are receptive to all sorts of new ideas, some transient, some lasting, some trivial, some profound.

## End Notes :

1. DIpv, ix, 24.
2. Gombrich Richard and Gananath Obeysekere, *Buddhism Transformed: Religious Changes in Sri-Lanka*, 1st ed. Princeton, USA, 1988, reprint Delhi, 1990, p. 30.
3. Senerat Paranavitana, 'Mahayanism in Ceylon', 'Ceylon Journal of Science 2', no. 1, (1928); pp. 35-71.
4. Obesekere Gananath, 'Social Change and the deities' *Man*, n.s. 12 (December 1977) pp. 377-96.
5. Gombrich Richard, *Buddhism Transformed: Religious changes in Sri-Lanka*, 1st ed. 1988.. reprint Delhi 1990, pp. 171 ff.
6. Hobby-horse is used for a rejected suitor, fashioned from the leaves of the palmyra-palm, to ride in a public place in order to shame the beloved into accepting him [Shulman's note, akam convention].
7. Cur (Skt. Surapadma) is in Tamil tradition the major enemy of Murukan [Shulman,s note].
8. Zvelebil, Kamil, "The Beginning of Bhakti in South India", *Temenos* 13, (1977): pp. 245-249.
9. Seligmann, C.G. and Seligmann Brenda, Z, "The Veddas", Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1911.
10. *Culavamsa*. 57, 8-9, p. 193.
11. S. Paranavitana, "The civilization of the period : Buddhism" in *History of Ceylon*, vol. I, PT. 2 (Colombo : University of Ceylong Press, 1960), p. 765.
12. Mudiyanse, N, *The Art and Architecture of the Gampola period (1341-11415 A.D.)* Colombo : M.D. Gunasena, 1965, p. 10.
13. Paavitana, "The Civilization" p. 764.

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